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STEVENSONIANA

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Robert Louis Stevenson.

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STEVENSONIANA

EDITED BY

J. A. HAMMERTON

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TO

LOVERS OF THE MAN

AND ADMIRERS OF THE ARTIST

Robert Louis Stevenson

THE WORLD OVER

THIS MISCELLANY OF ANECDOTE

AND CRITICISM IS

INSCRIBED

EDITOR'S NOTE

THE addition of one more to the already considerable list of books on Robert Louis Stevenson may be thought to call for some explanation, if not apology. The editor of the present volume is sanguine enough to hope that it will speak for itself; but even so a word or two by way of introduction will not be amiss. The title suggests most that need be said, since it indicates in one word the nature of the pages which it covers. But beyond all that one can thus advertise, there remain some important points requiring explanation.

In the first place, 'Stevensoniana' has been carried out under certain conditions self-imposed upon its editor with a view to rendering the work of especial value to all lovers of R. L. S. and admirers of his genius. The single aim ever before the editor was to search for his material in the forgotten pages of English and American periodicals, and in books by writers of eminence not entirely concerned with Stevenson. Thus, no passage of any length will be found in this work which appears in the 'Life' by Mr. Graham Balfour, in 'Robert Louis Stevenson: A Life Study in Criticism,' by Mr. H. Bellyse Baildon, or in any of the numerous books exclusively occupied with the personal character or literary qualities of the famous author. The exceptions to this rule are so few and so necessary, that one may fairly claim to have observed it adequately. Such exceptions have been called for chiefly in respect to poetical pieces.

It was represented to the editor that in working within these limits he was possibly detracting from the value

of his compilation; but he is hopeful that the result has justified his restriction. For the mass of material to be handled would have been much greater—vast though it was—and would have entailed tiresome overlapping, the avoidance of which has been one of his chief difficulties. Moreover, it has seemed to him that to supplement rather than to repeat is to produce a more acceptable work. Hence permission has not been sought to quote a single passage from the long series of intimate sketches by Mrs. Isobel Strong and Mr. Lloyd Osbourne, and such excerpts as had been made from these in their magazine form were discarded immediately on hearing that they were to be issued as a book of 'Vailima Memories.'

By far the greater part of the work consists of matter, always interesting and often of high value, which might never have been brought together in one volume, and could have been consulted with great difficulty only, if at all. Perhaps, for this reason alone, 'Stevensoniana' carries its own excuse. The feeling uppermost in the mind of the editor while proceeding with the work of research and collation was one of surprise that a similar undertaking had not been essayed before, so rich and abundant was the material to engage any compiler.

No claim is made to completeness. To be complete in such a work were to be unreadable, if not impossible. But it is submitted that the book is as representative as circumstances will allow. Many admirable newspaper articles have been left untouched: the *Times* 'leader' on Stevenson's death, for example, as it represents nominally the impersonal opinion of a newspaper; and many an able critical study has not been quoted because it may have taken no new point of view, or its writer's personality may have lacked certain qualities of interest. Thus scores of ephemeral studies and sketches were rejected. Certain quotations from the *Quarterly*, the *Edinburgh*, and *London Quarterly Reviews* are the only

obvious exceptions to this rule which occur to the mind of the editor at the moment. Whenever anonymous authors have been quoted, it will be found that they have had something, little or important, to add to the cairn of *ana* which has been builded here to the beloved memory of R. L. S.

The means of thanking individually the goodly company of authors, editors, and publishers, without whose indulgent assistance 'Stevensoniana' had remained for its editor an 'enchanted cigarette'—if Balzac's simile may be so applied—cannot be duly exercised within the scant pages of this note, and to attempt a detailed list of acknowledgments would be to weight the volume with extra pages of doubtful interest. The editor is none the less—he could not be more—sincere in his expression of gratitude to all who have co-operated. On every hand he has met with ready courtesy and many unexpected acts of kindness which have rendered his labours fruitful where they might have been barren. With the notable exception of Mr. Andrew Lang, whose verses to Stevenson in the Scots tongue and whose 'Recollections' one would fain have quoted, every author approached has readily granted the desired permission. A very few cases have arisen in which writers have had personal reasons for not wishing to see their work reprinted: Mr. John Davidson in regard to his sonnet, and Mrs. Meynell in regard to her essay on 'Stevenson's Treasury of Womanhood,' should be mentioned in this connection. A number of the smaller items which are within 'the limits of legitimate quotation' have been used on that understanding, as it would have seriously delayed publication to have opened communication with most of their writers. In a few cases it has been found impossible to reach the authors of certain essential passages, and the editor has been able to secure permission from the editors only of the periodicals in which these appeared. In respect to most of the important

items, both editors and authors have been approached. So much for the authors, and also for the conductors of the different journals to which the selected passages are duly acknowledged.

Special mention must be made of the following publishers, whose names do not all appear against those of the books issued from their houses: Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, Mr. John Murray, Messrs. Chatto and Windus, Messrs. Longmans, Green and Co., Messrs. William Blackwood and Sons, Messrs. Isbister and Co., Mr. William Heinemann, Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, Mr. John Lane, Mr. A. H. Bullen, Mr. David Nutt, and Mr. A. L. Humphreys.

One thing remains to add: the name of Mr. Sidney Colvin, so pleasantly familiar in ears where that of Stevenson has sounded, is not among our contributors. The reason is as welcome as the absence is conspicuous: Mr. Colvin is engaged upon a life of R. L. S. to which we all look forward with high hope, and for which such reminiscences as he has already published are naturally reserved.

J. A. H.

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STEVENSONIANA

I

HIS FOREBEARS AND INHERITED CHARACTERISTICS

Robert Louis (Lewis) Stevenson was born at No. 8 Howard Place, Edinburgh, November 13, 1850. Thomas, his father, was the youngest son of Robert Stevenson, in common with whom and the latter's stepfather he held the post of Engineer to the Board of Northern Lighthouses. The mother of Robert Louis was the daughter of Dr. Lewis Balfour, parish minister of Colinton.

The following account of Stevenson's grandfather is abridged from the article in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica':

Robert Stevenson, Grandfather.

Robert Stevenson was the only son of Alan Stevenson, partner in a West Indian house in Glasgow, and was born in that city 8th June 1772. Having lost his father in infancy, he removed with his mother to Edinburgh. In his youth he assisted his stepfather, Thomas Smith, in his light-house schemes, and at the early age of nineteen was sent to superintend the erection of a lighthouse on the island of Little Cumbrae. He succeeded his stepfather, whose daughter he married in 1799, as Engineer to the Board of Northern Lighthouses, and at the same time began general practice as a civil engineer. During his period of office from 1797 to 1843, he designed and executed no fewer than eighteen lighthouses, the most important being that on the Bell Rock, begun in 1807 and

completed in 1810. In his general practice as a civil engineer he was employed in the construction of many county roads, harbours, docks, breakwaters, and several important bridges. It was he that brought into notice the superiority of malleable iron rods for railways over the old cast-iron, and he was the inventor of the movable jib and balance cranes. It was chiefly through his interposition that an Admiralty survey was established, from which the Admiralty sailing directions for the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland have been prepared. He published an account of the Bell Rock lighthouse in 1824, and, besides contributing important articles on engineering subjects to Brewster's 'Edinburgh Encyclopædia' and the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' was the author of various papers read before the societies he was connected with. He died at Edinburgh, 12th July 1850.

A 'Life of Robert Stevenson,' by his son David Stevenson, appeared in 1878. David Stevenson (1815-86), who along with his brother Alan succeeded to his father's business, was the author of a 'Sketch of the Civil Engineering of North America,' 'Marine Surveying,' 'Canal and River Engineering,' and of various papers read before learned societies.

Mr. J. F. George, writing in *Scottish Notes and Queries*, April 1903, supplies some suggestive notes of Stevenson's ancestry on his mother's side. His maternal grandfather, the Rev. Dr. Lewis Balfour of Colinton, was a younger son of John Balfour of Pilrig, and grandson of Professor James Balfour of the same place. Mr. George writes:

The Balfour Pedigree.

About 1650, James Balfour, one of the Principal Clerks of the Court of Session, married Bridget, daughter of Chalmers of Balbithan, Keithhall, and that estate was for some time in the name of Balfour. His son, James Balfour of Balbithan, Merchant and Magistrate of Edinburgh, paid poll-tax in 1696, but by 1699 the land had been sold. This was probably due to the fact that Balfour was one of the Governors of the Darien Company. His grandson, James Balfour of Pilrig (1705-1795), sometime Professor of Moral Philosophy in Edinburgh University, whose portrait is sketched in 'Catriona,' also made a Garioch [Aberdeenshire district] marriage,

his wife being Cecilia, fifth daughter of Sir John Elphinstone, second bart. of Logie (Elphinstone) and Sheriff of Aberdeen, by Mary, daughter of Sir Gilbert Elliot, first bart. of Minto.

Referring to the Minto descent, Stevenson claims to have 'shaken a spear in the Debatable Land and shouted the slogan of the Elliots.' He evidently knew little or nothing of his relations on the Elphinstone side. The Logie Elphinstones were a cadet branch of Glack, an estate acquired by Nicholas Elphinstone in 1499. William Elphinstone, a younger son of James of Glack and Elizabeth Wood of Bonnyton, married Margaret Forbes, and was father of Sir James Elphinstone, bart. of Logie, so created in 1701. . . .

Stevenson would have been delighted to acknowledge his relationship, remote though it was, to the 'Wolf of Badenoch,' who burned Elgin Cathedral without the Earl of Kildare's excuse that he thought the bishop was in it; the Wolf's son, the victor of Harlaw, [and] his nephew 'John o' Coull,' Constable of France. . . . Also among Tusitala's kin may be noted, in addition to the later Gordons of Gight, the Tiger Earl of Crawford, familiarly known as 'Earl Beardie,' the 'Wicked Master' of the same line, who was fatally stabbed by a Dundee cobbler 'for taking a stoup of drink from him'; Lady Jean Lindsay, who ran away with a 'common jockey with the horn,' and latterly became a beggar; David Lindsay, the last laird of Edzell, who ended his days as hostler at a Kirkwall inn, and "Mussel Mou'ed Charlie,' the Jacobite ballad-singer.

Stevenson always believed he had a strong spiritual affinity to Robert Fergusson. It is more than probable that there was a distant material affinity as well. Margaret Forbes, the mother of Sir James Elphinstone, the purchaser of Logie, has not been identified, but it is possible she was of the branch of the Tolquhon Forbeses who previously owned Logie. Fergusson's mother, Elizabeth Forbes, was the daughter of a Kildrummy tacksman, who by constant tradition is stated to have been of the house of Tolquhon. It would certainly be interesting if this suggested connection could be proved.

In a little work entitled 'The Parish of Colinton,' published in Edinburgh in the autumn of 1902, two

letters are printed from the celebrated Lord Cockburn, author of 'Memorials of his Time,' to the Rev. Dr. Lewis Balfour. In the first Cockburn is solicitous, in a practical way, about the heightening of the church spire. In the second, dated January 1840, he takes the liberty of modifying, in characteristic fashion, what he considered the over-lavish contribution which the minister had made to a valedictory presentation to the schoolmaster:

Anecdote of Dr. Lewis Balfour.

As I am told it is by no means a case of such urgency as justifies these heroic sacrifices, so take £4 off your benevolent but nonsensical £5. I meant to have given only £1, but that our friend might not lose by the deduction of your £4, I have made it £5.

In the editor's copy of the 'Account of the Skerryvore Lighthouse,' written by Alan Stevenson, and published by Messrs. A. and C. Black in 1848—two years before the birth of Alan's nephew, the novelist—there is pasted a newspaper clipping, evidently from the *Scotsman*, being a biographical sketch of the celebrated engineer. This article is written with so much literary grace and sympathetic knowledge of the man that it is worthy of quotation here:

Alan Stevenson, builder of Skerryvore.

Alan, eldest son of the late Robert Stevenson, the well-known civil engineer and author of the Bell Rock Lighthouse, was born at Edinburgh in 1807. He was educated at the High School and University, where he greatly distinguished himself, and took the then somewhat unusual degree of Master of Arts and obtained under Leslie the Fellowes Prize for excellency as an advanced student of Natural Philosophy. He afterwards studied in England under the direction of a clergyman, and received the degree of Bachelor of Laws from the University of Glasgow.

His own wish was to study for the Church, but he gave it up for his father's profession—in which he soon made himself a name. Though obliged by illness to retire from work when in the fulness of his years and powers, the services he performed

as Engineer to the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses were such as to entitle him to lasting remembrance in the annals of our highest scientific achievements—in a department at once so perilous, difficult in its nature, and so inestimable in its results. During his connection with the Board, he introduced many improvements in the dioptric system of illumination, and erected numerous lighthouses on our coasts, including his masterpiece, the renowned Skerryvore.

There is little doubt that the mental tension caused by the responsibilities and difficulties of this work, acting upon his sensitive, chivalrous, and unsparing nature, was the main cause of the sudden shattering of his nervous system, which, in 1852, made it necessary for him to withdraw absolutely from his profession and the world. What a trial this must have been to one of his keen, intrepid temper, his high enthusiasm, and his delight in the full exercise of his powers, no one but himself and those who never left him for these long dreary years can ever tell—when his mind, his will, his affections survived, as it were, the organ through which they were wont to act—like one whose harp is all unstrung, and who has the misery to know it can do his bidding no more. He died peacefully at his house at Portobello [23rd December 1865], in his fifty-ninth year.

Besides his purely professional excellences, Mr. Stevenson had genuine literary genius—not receptive merely, but in the true sense original.

He had in everything he did that grace and delicacy, that perception of spiritual depth and height, that sense of a beauty transcending all adequate expression, and that tender, pervading melancholy, which are among the bitter-sweet birthrights of genius. This is not the place for expatiating on that characteristic part of his nature, his ideality—without which in its measure and intensity he would not have been the great engineer and man of science we all know him to have been. Imagination proper—the sense of the possible, of a realisable ideal—has to do with building lighthouses and breakwaters, not much less than with the making of epics or oratorios. All such creative acts postulate a faculty of projection from the finite and known into the unknown and untried, whence is brought back that which becomes to the race a possession and a joy for ever—

be it a Skerryvore or Eddystone, a 'Divine Comedy' or a 'Prince of Denmark.'

Mr. Stevenson read Italian and Spanish critically and with ease, and knew both literatures thoroughly. He knew Homer by heart; and read Aristophanes in Greek more readily than most of us could read Montaigne in French. We remember, many years ago, hearing him say that when alone for months in the midst of the sea, at his lighthouse work, he read Don Quixote, Aristophanes, and Dante, twice through.

We have before us now a little volume printed this year for private circulation, entitled 'The Ten Hymns of Synesius, Bishop of Cyrene, A.D. 410, in English verse,' etc., which he thus speaks of in his preface: 'It pleased God in 1852 to disable me, by a severe nervous affection, for my duties as engineer to the Board of Northern Lighthouses; and I took to beguiling my great sufferings by trying to versify the whole ten hymns of Synesius. During many an hour the employment helped to soothe my pain.'

It is quite wonderful, if we consider the nature of the task and his broken health, how nobly he has rendered those sublime old hymns, in which we find the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul so glorified in Wordsworth's 'Intimations' of Immortality,' and with which the heavenly-minded Leighton refreshed himself, and eight of which were translated by Coleridge into English anacreontics, before that strange and mournful prodigy had reached his fifteenth year.

From an appreciation of R. L. S. published in the *Quarterly Review*, April 1895:

Thomas Stevenson's literary taste.

For his pedigree, it was, in the best Scottish sense, honourable. To be mentioned in Gibbon's 'Decline and Fall,' says Thackeray, is like having your name written on the façade of St. Peter's at Rome. It is hardly less to have had a grandfather whose name stands in one of Scott's prefaces, more especially when the book thus introduced is 'The Pirate,' and secret ambition pricks us on till we rival or outdo that ill-written yet moving romance of the sea-rover, with a certain 'Treasure Island' of our own.

From his Highland ancestors Louis drew the strain of Celtic melancholy, with all its perils and possibilities, and its kinship to the mood of day-dreaming, which has flung over so many of his pages now the vivid light wherein figures imagined grow real as flesh and blood, and yet again the ghostly, strange, lonesome, and stinging mist, under whose spell we see the world bewitched, and every object quickens with a throb of infectious terror. 'Love, anger, and indignation,' we read in the son's too brief and touching outline of his father, Thomas Stevenson, 'shone through him and broke forth in imagery.'

How impressive, how enlightening is it to be told of his 'just and picturesque' language, of his 'freakish humour,' clothing itself in a vesture at once apt and emphatic; above all, of the painful yet surely most admirable circumstance attending his last moments, when, as he began to 'feel the ebbing' of that great power of speech, the dying 'would reject one word after another as inadequate, and leave his phrase unfinished, rather than finish it without propriety.' What an inbred charm and eloquence must language have possessed for such a one, who even with failing breath would not handle it rudely!

Here is the artist, born, not made; his more illustrious descendant has the fame, but Thomas Stevenson had the gift; and his original delicacy of tone and spirit was bequeathed along with the humour and the emotion—but these, perhaps, in less ample measure—to the son whom we are considering.

The following short sketch of Stevenson's mother, called forth by her death, appeared in the *Scots Pictorial*, May 22, 1897, and was signed 'W. S. D.':

The Mother of R. L. S.

Mrs. Stevenson did not look her age—far from it. So bright and almost youthful in appearance was she, that one found it difficult to realise the fact of her being the mother of that far-famed son who died two and a half years ago at the age of forty-five. Mrs. Stevenson's absorption in all that related to her dear son was in a sense public property. Some inkling of it, at all events, was given at the meeting held in the Music Hall of Edinburgh for the purpose of publicly setting a-foot the movement for a national com-

memoration of his fame. How fresh in memory seem all the incidents connected with that great concourse of (as one fears) chiefly *pseudo* enthusiasts! Lord Rosebery was in the chair, and it was well that he was so. For if the story be true that Mrs. Stevenson had found some difficulty in gaining admission to the Hall with the rest of the crowd, Lord Rosebery's speech made amends for that curious mismanagement. He intimated the fact of her presence in the first words of his speech; and with what supreme tact he did so, in gesture and in modulation of voice, who can forget that saw and heard him? The brief words, 'His mother is here,' make themselves audible now; and with how pathetic an echo!

It may at the same time be interesting to record how the fond motherly pride which led Mrs. Stevenson to that platform showed itself in ways less public. Even a chance acquaintance could see how Mrs. Stevenson was wrapped up in all that recalled her son. His early works? She had a little album of his first *Cornhill* and other essays and stories, which one felt it a privilege to be allowed a glimpse of; and there was something as *naïf* as it now seems touching in her wonderment about the booklet, written in early days for a small missionary sale of work in her own drawing-room, which has come to be a collectors' joy and treasure. His first Colinton and Swanston days? There she put one right: it was not in the manse but at the hill-farm that he wrote 'The Pentland Rising.' And as one told over the names which he has immortalised, she put in one's hands the view of each place—to linger over Halkerside as a scene consecrated to a double memory, for there were the rock-engraven initials both of father and son. And the portraits? Ah! it goes to one's heart to think how Mrs. Stevenson spoke of them. Was she not a true mother, in holding that most likenesses represented poor Louis as more of an invalid than he was, and pronouncing in favour of that Samoan photograph, taken in his riding things; which showed him robust and athletic?

The haunting lines of that 'Underwoods' poem come back—'It is not yours, O mother, to complain'—and its companion piece, 'Mater Triumphans.' Collate them; let the tropic intensity of the one harmonise with the stately cadence of the

other; and what is your final reflection? Why, an utterance of thanks. For the singer of great destinies, the achiever of deeds equalling those he sang—he who 'with pen did open' more than 'the doors of kings,' who 'thrilled with the joy of girded men' others that could tell no more than he of having

> 'Wielded in the front of war
> The weapons that he made'—

this true inspirer of the modern world had not, after all, to break with the ties of which his verses spoke. The poem first named, in particular, is something more than the universal mother's consolation against the universal complaint of the proverb, 'a son's a son till he gets a wife.' It is something more than a melodious voice of comfort to those mothers whose sons—in our Empire especially—perforce go over seas and to far-off lands. The heartfelt pain of a life-long exile underlies it. 'It is not yours, O mother, to complain': that is the part of 'the children . . . austerely led.' But the severance in his case was not life-long, if the exile inevitably became so. Though it was never given him his 'numerous footsteps nimbly to retrace,' one great motive for his return was at all events done away with. For it is recalled that in a happy article of time the late Mrs. Stevenson went to visit him at Vailima; and that on that fateful December day three winters ago she was by his side.

Anecdote of Mrs. Thomas Stevenson.

At a meeting of the Mansfield House Settlement in the spring of 1902, Mr. Percy Alden, the warden, related a story of the mother of Robert Louis Stevenson. The widow of the novelist was telling how, in the island of Samoa, the old lady had taken walks with a native chieftain 'who had killed thousands, and eaten *hundreds*!'

'Oh, Fanny!' exclaimed the novelist's mother in horror, 'you know it was only eleven!'

II

FROM BOYHOOD TO MANHOOD

An only child and delicate, Louis was the subject of his mother's anxious care. His nurse Alison Cunningham ('Cummie') is credited with helping to shape his early tastes, especially in the sense of awakening in him his love for the romance of Scotland. He was precocious in a literary way, at six years of age dictating to his mother a history of Moses for a prize offered by an uncle. Mother and nurse constantly read to him, and he had reached the age of eight years before he began to read books himself. He went to school in 1859, *but ill health rendered his attendance irregular, and during the years* 1862-63 *his mother travelled with him a great deal on the Continent for his health's sake. At school his bent of mind was displayed by his starting several manuscript magazines, and before he was fifteen he had used up no small quantity of paper in scribbling stories, the most pretentious of which is said to have had for subject the murder of Archbishop Sharpe. In* 1867 *he went to Edinburgh University, which he left without taking a degree, and where his time was largely spent in a 'highly rational system of truantry.' Declining in* 1871 *to follow his father's profession, he read for the Scots bar, to which he was called in July* 1875. *Some months were spent in a law office, but his total practice as a barrister extended to four briefs, for which the fees did not reach 'double figures.' From* 1873 *to* 1879 *his life was chiefly passed in travel, and his first two books were devoted to accounts of Continental wayfaring.*

Most people seem to know that R. L. Stevenson was baptized Lewis and not Louis, but very few know the reason for the change. It was not, as is generally supposed, made by himself out of some literary affection or affectation for foreign ways, but by his father. Thomas Stevenson was a sturdy Scots Tory, than whom no Tory in the world is more desperate, and there was in Edinburgh a person of authority no less stringent a Radical. Now that this person, whose name was Lewis, a rare name in Scotland, should be taken by any one to have given his name to the boy, was more than Thomas Stevenson could endure. And so the name was spelled Frenchwise to divert suspicion. In later days, we believe that R. L. S. hankered after the ancient name, but it made no difference, since no one called him 'Louis' save in print.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

Lewis, not Louis.

To the *English Illustrated Magazine*, May 1899, 'Two of his Cousins' (Mrs. Marie Clothilde Balfour and her husband, Dr. J. Craig Balfour of Edinburgh) contributed an article which contained many valuable details of Stevenson's childhood and youth in Edinburgh. From this paper the following excerpts are taken:

Robert Louis Stevenson was an only son, but he was one of a large family of cousins and kinsfolk. Called after his grandfather, Dr. Lewis Balfour, he had five cousins who shared the name with him; so that they had to be distinguished from each other by sobriquets more or less reasonable. There were, for instance, 'Delhi' and 'Cramond,' from the respective places of their birth; while his own nickname among the boys was 'Smout.' He was a very delicate child, as has been said, and not always fit for play with other children; but he had a delightful and untirable companion always at hand—himself. He never was lonely, even in the 'land of counterpane.' He told himself stories, of which instalments were told sometimes to other people also: they were generally tales of adventure so complicated that it was a marvel how he ever found his way

Boyhood recalled by 'Two of his Cousins.'

through them; and yet he never made a mistake—or, at least, never let himself be found out in one.

With his cousins 'Smout' was always a favourite. 'Even when it was at his own expense, he had a way of telling a story that made it seem the funniest thing in the world,' one of them says of him. 'I've heard him repeating old tales against me, and he made us laugh over them consumedly—I as much as any one.' Moreover, he and they, as was natural, shared many interests. Whether it was the fashion among boys then, a fashion that has since gone out, I do not know—it may have only come from having many relations in far countries—but several of the cousins had 'museums,' as they called them, collections of things sent home from India or China, begged from one or the other, or picked up in Leith curiosity-shops. Leith was a great place of pilgrimage in those days to the boys: they knew all the windows where, amid a heterogeneous collection, something out of the way might be looked for, a necklace of berries or some South Sea shells, a bit of jade, or perhaps a carved junk or models of Chinese or Malay fishing-boats. Louis Stevenson not only had a 'museum' himself, but he was a great purveyor to the others, by way of exchange; for in wintering abroad with his mother he had special opportunities, and was able to bring back from the Riviera bits of Roman pottery, tear-bottles, plaited palms from Bordighera, and so on. But his manner of exchange with his cousins was peculiar: he 'sold' the things at the rate of so many 'whacks' on the hand given with a strap or cane, to be taken without flinching. If the 'buyer' so much as winced, it had all to be begun over again. One of the cousins, who was not very old then, remembers having hard work sometimes to stand it when the object was a very enviable one, and the price of it, in 'whacks,' was high. It must be remembered that it was then a common thing that the entry into boys' societies was made conditional on bearing pain without complaint. I do not know whether it still is so.

When he was still a little lad, one of his uncles, Dr. George Balfour, was living at Cramond, some five miles out of Edinburgh. Louis was often out with his cousin and namesake, 'Cramond' Lewis; and it was the memory, no doubt, of days spent in the narrow wooded valley of the Almond, where the

old bridge crosses the river and the village nestles down beside it, that led him later to choose this spot for the home of Balfour of Shaws, in 'Kidnapped.' It is beautiful enough, full of sun and shade and the sound of running water, to be long and lovingly remembered: and he was not one who forgot.

Among the places in Edinburgh where his memory clings closest, of course the house in Heriot Row comes first. How dear it was to him we can guess: *we* know how well his cousins loved it, and how hard it is to pass the door now, when it is empty of all save remembrance. For all are gone who used to live there—all, except only 'Cummie,' his old nurse—and the house is strange to us. Thomas Stevenson, kindest and quaintest of uncles, his wife, his son, so many of the old friends—even Coolin and Smuroch and Jura, the dogs—surely are still just within the door; we cannot think them elsewhere; and we would not enter to be disappointed. Happily, I could almost say, the house now is strange to us. There Louis was at home, falling ill, tediously roused back to comparative health, playing all the time, as he played, boy and man, all his life; playing in sickness and making a play of sickness, and finding even there enjoyment. In the library he shared with his cousins a world of adventure, amid pirates and savages, in unknown seas and strange waters; a long folding arm-chair or lounge was usually chosen for the boat, being conveniently on castors, and was pushed about by the bar-bells, which he was ordered to use to develop his chest. He was apt to remember their existence more often for other, and less improving, purposes, such as the above. It was here, upstairs, that he undertook to make his younger cousins 'see ghosts'; they were shut, each in his turn and alone, in a dark room, where the spectres were produced by means of a magic-lantern worked by threads passing out under the door. Louis, upon the landing outside, vastly enjoyed the fun; the small boy within submitted to it—with a difference. One of them is even willing to admit that he may have been a *little* bit frightened. . . . Still, Louis had the knack of making anything in which he shared delightful, though it might be, and generally was, 'creepy.' It is only fair to allow also that he frightened himself quite as much as he ever frightened any one else. Later, indeed, when he was abroad and alone, having

read some old books on magic, it came into his head that he, too, would like to 'raise the devil'; and with great pains he copied the circles, the double pentagon, and the mystic symbols, drawing them about himself upon the floor, and making all his preparations carefully according to instruction. It was at night, and he was alone: 'And I got into the very biggest fright you can just imagine,' he afterwards told his cousin, one of the writers of this article, 'lest the devil should take me at my word, and really appear. I wondered how on earth I was going to get rid of him. I tell you, even now when I think of it I get hot all over.'

It was in the Heriot Row house, too, that he had his theatre; and what that was to him he himself has told us. Who has not read that most delightful chapter in 'Memories and Portraits,' which is headed 'Penny Plain, and Twopence Coloured'; and who, having read it, will not go on pilgrimage to another spot where his memory is still green, and which he himself has pointed out?

'There stands, I fancy, to this day . . . a certain stationer's shop at a corner of the wide thoroughfare that joins the city of my childhood to the sea.' . . .

Yes, it stands there still, at the corner of Antigua Street: a shop whose door pouts between two slanting windows, with a lending library filling shelves in its recesses, where some thirty years ago were piles of ancient fashion-books and bygone Keepsakes and Garlands. Then it was 'dark, and smelt of Bibles'; and in 'the Leith Walk window all the year round there stood displayed a theatre in working order.'

It may be that nowadays boys do not play with toy theatres, but they did then; and Louis tells us even that this same shop-window was 'a loadstone rock for all that bore the name of boy.' One of his cousins remembers still the joys of stage-management—for he concedes that looking on was slow work in comparison—the manipulation of the 'spoons' or wire-slides which held the figures, the painting of scenery (they scorned the 'twopence coloured' for economic as well as artistic reasons), and above all the delight of trick pieces, when, by means of threads, Cinderella's pumpkin opened into a carriage, or Harlequin turned a roast of beef into a plum-pudding. . . .

And there is still another place where he would wish to be

[*Specially photographed by Auty and Heaven.*

SHOP AT CORNER OF ANTIGUA STREET, EDINBURGH

'There stands, I fancy, to this day . . . a certain stationer's shop at a corner of the wide thoroughfare that joins the city of my childhood to the sea.'—R. L. S. in *Penny Plain and Twopence Coloured.*

remembered, the place that he himself remembered best of all: the old home at Colinton, where his mother and all her brothers and sisters grew up, and left only to go forth into the furthermost ends of the earth. For 'the face of the earth was peppered with the children of the manse, and letters with outlandish stamps became familiar to the local postmen,' . . . and presently the grandchildren came and went, and in time brought *their* children also to see—and to remember. A beautiful place, surely.

Set in the midst of the curving bank and clasping circle of trees there is the house, 'not so large as I had supposed' (we have, all of us, come back to feel that, after magnifying it in remembrance), but still 'a well-beloved house, its image fondly dwelt on by many travellers'—in so many parts of the world talked of and told of by those who had been children there to their own children, who will some day find their way back to it, as surely as needles to a magnet; written to so often, thought of so long, so full of the memories of those who have lived there, and of those who have died. A *well-beloved house*, surely. All about it one can almost trace the footsteps that have worn its paths. Here is the 'great yew, making a pleasing horror of shade'; yonder the deodar, which the eldest uncle sent home from India, a seed within an envelope, and which is now a tall and splendid tree. Up there are the gooseberry-bushes that used to be, we steadfastly believe, the best in all the world; and a little higher is the graveyard, where '*spunkies might be seen to dance, at least by children.*' And so many children have come and gone here; the sons and daughters of the manse themselves, and after them the next generation, a goodly troop of cousins, and among them the delicate lad who came out from Edinburgh to 'get well again,' Louis Stevenson. . . .

Down in the deep mill-pool one of the cousins went to sea in a tub, and only the special providence that watches over boys brought him back safe and sound to land; another rode the pony round by the 'black road,' through the kitchen and out at the front door, with the old cook clamorous behind him and the chiefer authorities safely out of the way. And from among the stones of the church-yard wall yonder, dead men's eyes looked out and wove themselves into nightmares.

An article on 'The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson' in the *Edinburgh Review*, July 1895, contained this passage relating to his life in Edinburgh:

Like Scott in his youth, he went climbing Arthur's Seat, scrambling over Salisbury Crags and Samson's stony ribs, and making excursions through the sheep-downs in the pastoral solitudes of the Pentlands. Like Scott in his ardent and impressionable youth, he was all unconsciously storing up the materials for his fictions. It was from Old Edinburgh he drew the fresh inspirations which never failed, even in the intoxicating atmosphere of the balmy South Seas, when, adapting his romances to the demands of the day, he had turned his attention to the white savages and the survivals of the buccaneers. The 'Picturesque Edinburgh' is admirably picturesque, and never did a sentimentally sensational writer light upon a more congenial subject.

Influence of Early Environment.

The impressions of his school days were deep and lasting. He recalls how he used to scramble up the wooded precipices of the Castle Hill, which had been scaled before him by nocturnal storming-parties in the wars of the Succession and in civil broils, and how he would triumph when he had laid a hand on the basement of the battlements. He remembers sympathetically how the urchins from Heriot's Hospital used to snatch a fearful joy in intruding on the sombre precincts of the Greyfriars' Cemetery, sanctified by the sufferings of Covenanting martyrs, and shout timid challenges in quavering accents at the haunted mausoleum of the Bloody Mackenzie.

As he grows up, his sense of the sublime and beautiful awakens into vigorous life. He becomes alive to the unrivalled beauties of a city which surpass the attractions of Prague or Salzburg. For Edinburgh, though like Jerusalem it is set upon a hill and surrounded by hills, is not shut in by a cincture of mountains. From the Castle, which is its Zion, and which crowns the rocky ridge of the Old Town, he looked out upon the epitomised panorama of stern but fertile Caledonia. In the distance is the blue range of the Highland hills, which used to be the barrier in the days of 'Kidnapped' and

'Catriona' between civilisation and comparative barbarism. In the middle distance are the Pentlands, which figure continually in his reminiscences, where the persecuted Covenanters were wont to hold their conventicles, and sometimes show fight at their field-preachings when assailed by the troopers of the Council. Hard by are the heights which look down upon Holyrood, once a favourite and convenient refuge of the malefactors of the Scottish metropolis, as Windsor Forest and Bagshot Heath used to be for the outlaws of London. Yet the grand and somewhat gloomy landscape is softened by a pleasant intermingling of the scenes and sights of peace and prosperity. Between the Castle and the Bass, where Balfour was kept in captivity, are stretched the rich farms of East Lothian; on the other side is Linlithgowshire, with the winding river, where Balfour and Alan went wandering; beyond the broad estuary of the Forth the grey smoke is rising from the prosperous fishing villages and townlets which skirt the coasts of the 'Kingdom,' and where the absconding banker was tracked by the *carbonari*; and the sea-view, as Stevenson says, is alive with steamers trailing their smoke towards the horizon, and with vessels under sail tacking towards the Baltic.

'The Early Home of Robert Louis Stevenson' was the subject of an article by Mr. John A. Ross in *Good Words*, March 1895, from which these passages are selected:

Swanston: His Early Home.

The place charms you by way of surprise. What is it doing there? How do you account for it? Most villages have their *raison d'être* writ large. They have grown up round old churches, or round solitary inns, which were convenient resting-places for travellers. One can find no reason for Swanston being where it is, or for it being anywhere at all. The wide, well-kept road which leads from the high-road to it, goes straight as an arrow to the garden gate of the old farmhouse which Stevenson writes so charmingly about in his 'Picturesque Notes of Edinburgh'; and there it stops. A little used by-path, deep with moss and leaf mould, leads to the village proper; and on the hillside above the village green, that stops also. You seem to have arrived at the final end of things.

Far up on the steep hillside you can trace the faint track of an old road that was used in the days of peddlers and pack-horses. It climbs the flank of Kirk Yetton, and rambles on into the heart of the Pentlands, and in the old days led to an old chapel which now lies submerged beneath one of the Edinburgh reservoirs. But in its best days it cannot have been more than a bridle-path. And as it does not prove that at any time Swanston was on the way from any place, to any other place, it leaves the problem of the existence of the village unsolved.

Its seclusion is not that of the familiar village which can be seen on the outskirts of any great city; the village which has played at being in the country, till its mighty neighbour has found it out and enfolded it, so that now it is merely a less convenient suburb than a business man chooses as his place of residence. It is the seclusion of a lonely hamlet in one of the deep glens of Perthshire or Argyleshire, where the inhabitants live a life apart from the hum and bustle of the world's great centres. Here, almost within reach of the sound of the church bells of Edinburgh, and quite within sight of the banner of brown smoke which drifts lazily across it before the wind, or which hangs over it like a thick palpable pall when no wind is stirring, and which has gained for it the fondly familiar name of 'Auld Reekie,' you have men and women living a life apart from the daily newspaper, and not greatly influenced by the penny post. No railway train rushes past to disturb the stillness. Let the Flying Scotsman or the Midday Diner rush their fastest and shriek their loudest, no echo of them can reach this hamlet at the base of the Pentlands. The stranger who arrives at Swanston steps back from the nineteenth to the seventeenth century. . . .

The village proper lies behind what is ambitiously called The Square. There is the inevitable village store, with its legend about tea and tobacco. . . . Every one seems to have built where and how he pleased. Consequently you have the oddest and most picturesque grouping of cottages you can possibly imagine. And where the village green is cut off from the hillside by a rough stone wall, stands the humble cottage of the shepherd John Todd, whose name and characteristics will be familiar to some at least of the succeeding generations, embalmed in Stevenson's matchless 'Pastoral.'

Swanston Cottage, Stevenson's own home, lies a little to the north-west of the village, from no part of which is it visible. You must climb the hillside at the back of the village green to see it, so completely is it embowered among trees.

The inhabitants are a long-lived race. They enter the mortal sphere in the usual way; about a century later they begin to complain of rheumatism. Then they gradually lose their grip of things, and in a moment of fatuity come into Edinburgh 'to be near the doctor,' as they say, and of course they die. I spoke to the veritable oldest inhabitant a few days ago about the longevity of the place. 'Ou ay,' was the response, 'they just come and bide.' . . .

The old lady remembered Louis Stevenson well. The family spent the greater part of each year in Swanston Cottage, and the lad's face and figure must have been familiar to all the villagers. He went daily to one of the city schools. I shall change that. He daily started from home to go to school. But he was a sad truant; so, I have no doubt, his parents and teachers thought. We, with the light of experience to guide us, know that he was better occupied.

In those early days, however, no stranger dreamt great things of young Stevenson. 'He is an awfu' laddie for speirin' questions about a' thing,' John Todd used to say; 'an' whenever you turn your back, awa' he gangs an' writes it a' doon.' That is a much likelier method than regular attendance at school for developing a genius—or a poacher! . . .

It, Swanston, may seem very tame and uninteresting to many men and women in the great cities, where the interests of life are so various and intricate as to be kaleidoscopic. But it did not present itself in that light to young Stevenson. For him, that easy, leisurely life, taking its time and direction not from the firing of the one o'clock gun in Edinburgh Castle, but from the needs and habits of man's humble dependants—horses, cows, and sheep—had an indescribable charm. It is—as he so beautifully points out in the chapter 'Pastoral' in 'Memories and Portraits'—the ancestral and archetypal life; which alone remains permanently interesting, amid the ever-changing forms and fashions which modern life has assumed.

And, as has been pointed out already, the peculiar flavour of

this life as seen in Swanston, is that it is here by way of contrast. It is going on within gunshot of one of the great homes of the English-speaking race, as placidly as if railways and telegraphs and telephones and typewriters and all the modern achievements which make life so desirable and so unpicturesque, had never been heard of. A contrast such as this is part of God's constant parable to our wayward fretting race, with its feverish energies, unrestrained ambitions, and endless crop of anxieties, cares, and squalid worries.

Mrs. Jessie Patrick Findlay wrote an article on 'A Link with the Early Home of R. L. Stevenson' in the Edinburgh *Evening Dispatch*, April 5, 1899. The following paragraphs are interesting:

More Swanston Memories.

On glancing down the obituary column of the *Scotsman* of April 1st, my eye was arrested by the following intimation:—'At Swanston, on the 30th March, Adam Ritchie, aged 78'; and at once, through the force of association, a little group of figures arose in my mind's eye, evoked by the magic spell of R. L. Stevenson's connection with Swanston.

His readers are familiar with two of these figures—John Todd, 'the oldest herd on the Pentlands'—that man of wrath and rugged tenderness; and Robert Young, the gardener at Swanston Cottage—that man of peace and eke of wilfulness. Stevenson, so far as we know, has left no written record of his acquaintance with the third of these figures—that of Adam Ritchie, the Swanston ploughman, who has just passed away. But Adam had the honour of a whilom intimacy with the vagrant scholar, and had much to say, in his slow, quiet way, about 'the lang-haired, idle-set laddie' that sometimes joined him while he was ploughing the fields round about that little moorland hamlet of some twenty houses which Stevenson graphically describes.

Adam Ritchie, like others of the 'douce' inhabitants of Swanston, did not know very well what to make of Stevenson. Although he succumbed to the spell of the youth's winning personality, he shook his head doubtfully at first over his

wandering proclivities, and could not divine his business among the fields and moors; apparently he 'did naething ava, and looked as if there wasna muckle in him!' But soon Adam began to have an inkling of the strange lad's 'trade,' and he delighted to tell how 'mony a time Stevenson would gang up the rig wi' me when I was ploughin', but he wadna gang very far without takin' oot his note-book and bit pencil, and there he would be writin' doon—Guidness kens what! He was never what ye could call communicative, but he was a devil to think, and he wasna sweir to speir what he didna ken.'

The Edinburgh *Evening Dispatch*, August 30, 1902, published a short sketch styled 'The Secret of Swanston: the Truth about Stevenson.' Despite a certain air of self-sufficiency and its pretentious heading, the anonymous article yields some items worthy of quotation:

'Stevenson's "Jekyll and Hyde,"' I said, looking at the book my friend had laid down as I entered his room. 'Yes,' he answered, 'the most bewildering book produced in the Victorian era. Where do you think he got the idea of the double life?'

'The Secret of Swanston.'

'That's a much disputed point, but the balance of evidence favours Deacon Brodie's Close in Edinburgh. Stevenson,' I continued, 'was familiar with the story of that worthy citizen by day and that criminal by night. It seems to have possessed a peculiar fascination for him. In an early dramatic effort of his we can see its influence.'

'He says himself that he got it from his brownies,' interrupted my friend, 'quite unexpectedly when he was waiting for his demon.'

'All the same, he was indebted there to his studies in Old Edinburgh. Over Scott and Stevenson alike the High Street had cast its spell. The key to all Stevenson's stories is the same.'

The narrator goes on to propose a walk; his friend, who has recently returned from Fontainebleau, favours a visit to Deacon Brodie's Close, but on his part he objects,

and a compromise is arranged in a ramble out to Swanston. The little sketch continues:

Down the long road we swung, till the roof of a house, struggling through the trees, half concealed by a knoll, came in sight, all dominated by a scarred ridge of the Pentlands.

'Pleasant enough on this summer evening to vie with Fontainebleau itself,' said my friend, looking round on the village of Swanston, where the honeysuckle clambered over the low roofs of the thatched cottages, and the little children flirted water at each other from the cool hill burn which winds down the hollow. 'Curious I should have lived all these years in Edinburgh, been an admirer of Stevenson, and never been out here before. Were this near Paris it would be the home of a colony of artists.'

'Let's sit down,' he said, moving towards a rustic seat by the dyke. The two country folks in possession moved along as we approached.

'Yes, we've a lot of visitors out here now.' This in response to our inquiry. 'An American the other day told me he came here first after landing. It's a' aboot that Stevenson an' his bukes. There's nothing in them. Noo, there's Burns,' he said. 'That's poetry. That wis wark.'

'Ay,' chimed in the other Swanston man, 'Stevenson would dae naething but lie aboot the dykes. He wouldna wark. He was aye rinnin' aboot wi' lang Todd, amang the hills, getting him to tell a' the stories he kent.'

'Todd?' broke in my friend. 'Is that the roaring shepherd?'

'I believe,' was the reply, 'he had the impidence to ca' him that in his bukes—though Todd was the makkin' o' 'im. Gin Todd had kent what Stevenson was ta dae wi' it, he wouldna have tell't him so much.' . . .

We walked half-way home in silence. Suddenly my friend broke out: 'There were two Stevensons—Stevenson the Worker, Stevenson the Idler—Stevenson the Scot, Stevenson the Frenchman—"polar twins" continuously struggling in the agonised womb of consciousness.'

'That's from "Jekyll and Hyde,"' I replied.

'Yes,' he said slowly, 'that's my explanation. It wasn't Deacon Brodie at all. In the story, Hyde, the worse one, wins.

Henley, in his estimate of Stevenson, makes out that the later Stevenson, the friend of the missionary—the believer in prayer—was not the real Stevenson. The Stevenson who quarrelled with his father of the revolt period—that to him was the real Stevenson. All the time Stevenson was coming to himself—to his best self. In real life Jekyll won, and not Hyde.

'That,' said he, as we parted, 'is the secret of Swanston—the truth about Stevenson—at last.'

Stevenson's Literary Apprenticeship.

The initials S. R. C. appended to an essay on 'The Apprenticeship of Robert Louis Stevenson,' in the *Bookman* of March 1893, stand for Samuel Rutherford Crockett, who in that very year came into fame with the publication of 'The Stickit Minister.' After giving us a hint of Stevenson's home-sickness as disclosed in his private letters, and contrasting that with his 'boasting in print of his high-set, far-shining palace, his nineteen waterfalls, and the blue sky over all' away there in Samoa, Mr. Crockett goes on to say:

There is 'a nameless trickle that springs in the green side of Allermuir, and is fed from Halkerside with a perennial tea-cupful'—a streamlet with a brief race and no history, save that by its side a dreamy, loose-jointed stripling used to come and sit, and most industriously make bad verses. Beneath lies the Lothian plain dotted with villages, blue smoke blowing westward over it, while to seaward is the pyramid of Berwick Law with the Bass a-tiptoe looking over its shoulder. Beneath there is a fine tangle of moss and heather, peat-hag and bracken, in which to play at hunted Covenanter. It was just here that Robert Louis Stevenson found his articulate soul. The spring is still there, the trickle of water, the one inconsiderable but indubitable pool, overhung by the smallest stone that was ever called a 'rock.' But for literary purposes 'tis an excellent rock. More excellent was it when our John-a-Dreams lay hid in the fastnesses and made a world for himself—or many worlds, rather—some of which he has since annexed to English literature,

Long and lazy, frank with himself and with his intimates, sulky with those unworthy to be admitted into his little world of imaginings, it is small wonder if many who then saw the moody boy, to this day retain the impression that he 'had a want.' Memory of Stevenson the Younger is mostly dead about the Pentlands. But some will still vaguely remember him as a lad 'that lay aboot the dyke-backs wi' a buik'—this with the happiest touch of scorn for the 'fecklessness' of such a performance. 'He wasna thocht verra muckle o'.' 'It wasna jaloosed (suspected) that he wad ever come to muckle.' These are the sole impressions which the inquirer can now gather hereabouts of the boyhood of the romancer. . . .

His literary works are totally unknown about Swanston and the Pentland edge. Only one old wife has an idea that there was a 'laddie Stevenson' who had written 'something aboot the Covenanters,' a creditable performance which was hardly to be expected of one who 'favoured the Estaiblished Kirk.' She is of opinion that she saw the identical pamphlet not so long ago. Here it is found after strict search, carefully preserved between the leds (boards) of the Bible—its green cover re-covered with an overcoat of brown paper which announces itself as having formed part of a teabag sold twenty-five years ago by a grocer of Penicuik. The 'something aboot the Covenanters' resolves itself into 'The Pentland Rising, a Page of History, 1666. Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, 17 Princes Street, 1866.' In the centre of the bold apple-green within the teabag cover, is the motto:

> 'A cloud of witnesses ly here,
> Who for Christ's interest did appear.'
> —*Inscription on Battlefield at Rullion Green.*

The little pamphlet of twenty-two pages, the earliest and rarest of Robert Louis Stevenson's works, is very accurately dated as having been completed at 'Edinburgh, 28th Nov. 1866,' that is, just a fortnight after he had completed his sixteenth year, and on the anniversary of the bi-centenary of the battle of Rullion Green. We may take it that the little pamphlet was written at Swanston with his eye on the immediate scene of the events. Childish enough in its writing, it is full of interest; and, though

crowded with references to the authorities (Wodrow, 'Cloud of Witnesses,' Naphthali, 'Faithful Contendings,' Kirkton, 'Outed Minister,' and even Defoe's 'History of the Church'), for directness of expression and clearness of narrative it might have been written by a simple-minded eye-witness. There is no doubt on which side are the young author's sympathies. He is frankly partisan, as indeed every Scot must be by nature. The 'persecutors' are all 'bloody-minded' and 'cruel.' In this strenuous advocacy we see the lad who had already acted it all out on the green Pentland side. 'I skulked in my favourite wilderness like a Cameronian of the Killing Time, and John Todd was my Claverhouse, and his dogs my questing dragoons.' This is the true, ineradicable way of learning history. The man who has thus learned his history may assume in later life a superficial calmness of criticism, he may read apologies for Clavers and Lag with resolve to rise superior to prejudice; he may even write them; but he will ever be Covenanter down at the heart of him, so that he cannot look upon a rusty old flag hung among bones and battle-axes in a museum without the water rising in his eyes, brimming to the overflow, and without gripping hands till the nails sink into the flesh to keep down something that takes him in the throat.

So it is strange in Stevenson's books, as well as in his conversation, to see his cosmopolitan ease, the calm light in the eyes which look out at once smiling and observant upon the wide world, in a moment exploded by a flash of suggestion from the bleak Nor'land where the whaups are crying about the martyrs' graves.

Does one but mention the Grassmarket to him, and it is no more Louis Stevenson of Samoa and the World that listens, but the lad who at sixteen wrote of young Hugh M'Kail who was martyred there in the flower of his youth; it is no intellectual Gallio, but one who, though he might have marched with the clans from the braes of Mar because the skirl of pipes makes him mad, yet longs like Peden to be 'wi' Ritchie' in the last stand which the preacher-soldier Richard Cameron made on Airds Moss. Artistic feeling, the society of many men, the influences of spheres where the Covenanters are only spoken of

as ignorant rebels, have not changed the essential Covenanting base of Stevenson's character.

Mr. Crockett further on quotes the following passage from 'The Pentland Rising' illustrative of 'the eery and other-world element in the lad': 'Kirkton the historian and popular tradition tell us,' he says, 'of a flame that would often rise from the grave, in a moss near Carnwath, of some of these poor rebels; of how it crept along the ground, of how it covered the house of the murderer, and scared him with its lurid glare.' Of this Mr. Crockett observes:

The manner in which this is told leaves us little room to doubt that the picture of the flame-wrapped house and the persecutor within, clammy terror sitting in the inwards of his soul, was one which long haunted the imagination of the boy. The idea is one which came out of the same basket as the spiritual terrors of Dr. Jekyll, and of Gordon Darnaway in 'The Merry Men,' and of Uncle Ebenezer alone in the great house of the Shaws. It shows that Stevenson, even as a schoolboy, was continually wandering round the confines of the other world, and companying with the men of a time to whom such things as these were the sternest of realities—the days, indeed, when in the words of the famous rhyme

> 'Hab Dab and Dawvid Dinn,
> Dang the De'il ower Dabson's Linn.'

Touching Stevenson's marked gift of descriptive writing, Mr. Crockett has an interesting comparison to make. He says:

Even at sixteen, the boy who in the fulness of his powers was to write the marvellous description of the Merry Men of Aros, had begun to learn his trade. It is instructive to compare the following two passages:—'On such a night, he peers upon a world of blackness where the waters wheel and boil, where the waves joust together with the noise of an explosion, and the

foam towers and vanishes in the twinkling of an eye. Never before had I seen the Merry Men thus violent. The fury, height, and transiency of their spoutings was a thing to be seen and not recounted. High over our heads on the cliff rose their white columns in the darkness; and the same instant, like phantoms, they were gone. 'Sometimes three at a time would thus aspire and vanish; sometimes a gust took them, and the spray would fall about us, heavy as a wave. Yet the spectacle was rather maddening in its levity than impressive by its force. Thought was beaten down by the confounding uproar; a gleeful vacancy possessed the brains of men, a state akin to madness; and I found myself at times following the dance of the Merry Men as it were a tune upon a jigging instrument.'

Here the magic is due not to any very remarkable photographic accuracy of description, certainly not to the cataloguing which sometimes passes for realism, but to an author whose personality is never hid from us, and who is conscious of his power to charm us, making himself part of what he describes, and throwing the limelight of his imagination upon the mad dance of the waters. . . .

If a description written by Stevenson, the apprentice, be taken to compare with this masterpiece of the complete craftsman, the result is very instructive.

'The sun, going down behind the Pentlands, casts golden lights and blue shadows off their snow-clad summits, slanted obliquely into the rich plain before them, bathing with rosy splendour the leafless, snow-sprinkled trees, and fading gradually into shadow in the distance. To the south, too, they beheld a deep-shaded amphitheatre of heather and bracken—the course of the Esk, near Penicuik, winding about at the foot of its gorge—the broad, brown expanse of Maw Moss—and fading into blue indistinctness in the south, the wild heath-clad Peeblesshire hills.'

Clearly, of course, this is the work of a beginner, but it is work done with an eye on the object—carefully done too, for though the effect of the whole be commonplace, it is so because it is easier to describe the Day of Judgment than an ordinary sunset. From Rullion Green every word is true, absolutely and exactly. The sun does still 'slant obliquely,' the Moorfoots do

curve round to form an amphitheatre, through which the Esk water runs. Maw Moss is still a 'broad, brown expanse.' On the whole, in 'The Pentland Rising' we have a 'prentice work of no ordinary promise, and one which, written at the age of between fifteen and sixteen, reveals many of the most interesting and remarkable characteristics of a style and personality as unique as any in all English literature.

From an article by Mr. Luther S. Livingstone in the New York *Bookman*, January 1900:

First Published Writings.

Stevenson's first appearance in type was in a little pamphlet, 'The Pentland Rising.' It consists of twenty pages, numbered from three to twenty-two, enclosed in a green cover, upon which the title is printed. It is dated at end 'Edinburgh, 28th Nov., 1866,' and was probably written before he was sixteen years of age, his birthday being November 13. This birthday of his that year was the two hundredth anniversary of the rising of the Scots in the Pentland Hills against the inhuman laws of their English rulers. The circumstances of the writing and printing seem to be nowhere chronicled, but it may be surmised that the boy, full of love of his own Scotland and its history, his own birthday falling on the anniversary of an event so momentous in its after consequences, wrote this little sketch, which his proud relatives had printed. The little book was evidently treasured carefully, as at the sale of books belonging to his own and his mother's estate last April there were twenty copies of 'The Pentland Rising.'

This little sketch has never been reprinted. When Colvin was editing the Edinburgh Edition, Stevenson was appealed to for permission to reprint some of his juvenile pieces and contributions to magazines. After giving a list of some of the latter, he says: 'I have no objection to any of these being edited, say with a scythe and reproduced. But I heartily abominate and reject the idea of reprinting "The Pentland Rising." For God's sake let me get buried first.' There can, however, be no objection to reprinting here the paragraph giving an account of the beginning of the revolt. The boyish character of the language is apparent in this extract:

'Upon Tuesday, November 13, 1666, Corporal George Deanes and three other soldiers set upon an old man in the clachan of Dalry and demanded the payment of his fines (for not attending church, etc.). On the old man's refusing to pay, they forced a large party of his neighbours to go with them and thresh his corn. The field was a certain distance out of the clachan, and four persons, disguised as countrymen, who had been out on the moors all night, met this mournful drove of slaves, compelled by the four soldiers to work for the ruin of their friend. However, chilled to the bone by their night on the hills, and worn out by want of food, they proceeded to the village inn to refresh themselves. Suddenly some people rushed into the room where they were sitting, and told them that the soldiers were about to roast the old man, naked, on his own girdle (*sic*, probably a misprint for gridle).[1] This was too much for them to stand, and they repaired immediately to the scene of this gross outrage, and at first merely requested that the captive should be released. On the refusal of the two soldiers who were in the front room, high words were given and taken on both sides, and the other two rushed forth from an adjoining chamber and made at the countrymen with drawn swords. One of the latter, John M'Lellan of Barskob, drew a pistol and shot the corporal in the body. The pieces of tobacco pipe with which it was loaded, to the number of ten at least, entered him, and he was so much disturbed that he never appears to have recovered, for we find him long afterward in a petition to the Privy Council requesting a pension for him. The other soldiers then laid down their arms, the old man was rescued, and the rebellion was commenced.'

Stevenson afterwards wrote under the same title what he describes as a 'bulky historical romance without a spark of merit,' the manuscript of which he long ago destroyed.

Before the influx upon the market of the twenty copies belonging to Stevenson's mother, 'The Pentland Rising' was very rare, and copies had sold for upward of one hundred dollars. At present, however, it does not command quite so high a price.

[1] The misplacing of the vowel in this word is common in Scotland. —Ed.

In 1868 he wrote 'The Charity Bazaar,' a boyish skit, filling four pages quarto, and which was privately printed. His next appearance in print seems to have been in the pages of a college paper, the *Edinburgh University Magazine*, which he and three fellow-students edited, and which lived through four numbers only. These numbers were issued from January to April 1871. He says:

'A pair of little active brothers—Livingstone[1] by name, great skippers on the foot, great rubbers of the hands, who kept a bookshop over against the University building—had been debauched to play the part of publishers.'

The first number was edited by all four associates, the second by Stevenson and James Walter Ferrier, the third by Stevenson alone, and of the last he says: 'It has long been a solemn question who it was that edited the fourth,' and then: 'It would perhaps be still more difficult to say who read it. Poor yellow sheet, that looked so hopefully in the Livingstones' window! Poor, harmless paper, that might have gone to print a Shakespeare on, and was instead so clumsily defaced with nonsense! And, shall I say, Poor Editors? I cannot pity myself, to whom it was all pure gain. It was no news to me, but only the wholesome confirmation of my judgment, when the magazine struggled into half-birth, and instantly sickened and subsided into night.'

Stevenson contributed six articles to the four numbers, one of which, 'An Old Scotch Gardener,' he revised and reprinted in 'Memories and Portraits.'

Stevenson's father and grandfather had been civil engineers and famous as lighthouse builders. Had he been of a more robust constitution, he would have been brought up to the same calling, that being his father's wish. As it was, several summers were passed with his father in assisting with the work at various points on the coast of Scotland. In 1869 he made the tour of the Orkneys and Shetlands on board the steam yacht of the Commissioners of Northern Lights, and in 1870 a similar tour of the Western Islands. He was, however, more a lover of the sea from the standpoint of the artist than that of the civil

[1] The death of Mr. S. M. Livingstone was reported in the *Westminster Gazette* of 24th May 1902.

engineer. 'I can't look at it practically; however, that will come, I suppose, like grey hair or coffin nails,' he says in a letter to his mother while absent on one of these expeditions.

He, however, gave the family calling considerable study, and on March 27, 1871, read a paper before the Royal Scottish Society of Arts, a 'Notice of a New Form of Intermittent Light for Lighthouses,' for which he received the Society's silver medal, value three sovereigns. This paper was printed separately from the transactions of the Society in a thin pamphlet, consisting of five pages of text only, beside the title-leaf. It has the head-line, 'Mr. L. Stevenson on a New Form of Light for Lighthouses,' and contains five illustrations in the text. The invention or idea in its simplest form consisted of a permanent hemispherical mirror behind the light with a smaller hemispherical mirror revolving in front of it. The thing aimed at was to produce an intense, full-power light alternating immediately, without gradations with absolute darkness.

This little pamphlet, four leaves only, without cover, is the author's first book with his name on the title-page.

Stevenson at Edinburgh University.

Mr. Charles Lowe, M.A., many years the *Times* correspondent in Berlin, was a contemporary of Stevenson's at the Edinburgh University, and has given us in 'Robert Louis Stevenson: A Reminiscence' (the *Bookman*, November 1891), a valuable addition to the rather lean budget of personal recollections of the novelist at this most interesting period of his life.

Mr. Lowe describes how he had noted Stevenson 'by the possession of exterior qualities which marked him off strongly from the rest of his comrades' before he knew who he was, his first meeting with him arising out of a poetical effusion which Mr. Lowe had submitted to the editors of the short-lived *Edinburgh University Magazine* —R. L. S. and James Walter Ferrier. Stevenson tapped him on the shoulder one day in Professor Kelland's class-room, mentioned the poem, and so to an after gathering at 'The Pump,' 'there to continue our

discussion over Edinburgh ale and cold meat pies; and I cannot remember that I ever spent a more pleasant, or, indeed, a more inspiring hour in Auld Reekie than the first one I thus passed with Robert Stevenson.'

From that single hour's conversation with the embryo author of 'Treasure Island,' I certainly derived more intellectual and personal stimulus than ever was imparted to me by any six months' course of lectures within the walls of 'good King James's College.' He was so perfectly frank and ingenuous, so ebullient and open-hearted, so sunny, so sparkling, so confiding, so vaulting in his literary ambitions, and withal so widely read and well-informed—notwithstanding his youth, for he could scarcely have been out of his teens then—that I could not help saying to myself that here was a young man who had commended himself more to my approval and emulation than any other of my fellow-students. . . .

Young Stevenson devoted much more of his time to the fortunes of his *Magazine* than to the attainment of merit-marks in his lecture-rooms, where, indeed, his appearance was less the rule than its exception. He had a supreme contempt for plodding and prize-taking, of which he writes in his 'Apology for Idleness': 'They have been to school or college, but all the time they have had their eye on the medal.' Stevenson himself never had his eye on the medal. He scorned the medal, and another sentence in the same essay is a pure bit of personal autobiography, as far as his academic career was concerned. 'Extreme busyness,' he writes, 'whether at school or college, kirk or market, indicates a system of deficient vitality; while a faculty for idleness implies a catholic appetite and a strong sense of personal identity.' Stevenson, I say, despised the medal; he was none of your examination crammers and competition wallahs; but, on the other hand, he was as omnivorous a general reader—if chiefly, perchance, in the lighter pastures of literature—as was young Teufelsdröckh in the university library of Weissnichtwo; and he has already reaped his reward for thus having followed the bent of his own tastes in spite of the spirit and formulas of his time.

A gentleman who was at the university with Stevenson said he was 'always supposing.' 'If you were walking along the street with him, and the most trivial thing struck his eye, he would start supposing—supposing that was something else; supposing this, that, or the other thing had never happened, supposing you were he under such circumstances—in fact there was no end to his supposing; and,' adds his old fellow-student, 'I suppose that's how he got to the top of the tree in fiction.'—*Edinburgh Dispatch*, 19th December 1894.

'Always Supposing.'

At college he describes himself as 'a lean, ugly, idle, unpopular student,' whose shiverings on wet, east-windy morning journeys up to class, infinite yawnings during lecture, and delight in truantry, gave little promise of devotion to book-learning. But there happened to be a brace of books, not in the university curriculum, which Master Louis kept by him, and in one of which he read, in the other wrote, with unflagging zeal. Thus he would get some practice, by effort and imitation, in rhythm, in harmony, in the fitting of part to part. He played 'the sedulous ape' to Hazlitt, to Lamb, to Wordsworth, to Sir Thomas Browne, to Hawthorne, to Montaigne, to Baudelaire, to Obermann—a perplexing mosaic of colours, but with this common to them all, that, in their highest touches, the expression is nothing short of unique. —*Quarterly Review*, April 1895.

'The Sedulous Ape.'

In his valuable 'Personal Memories of Robert Louis Stevenson,' contributed to the *Century*, July 1895, and published in revised form in 'Critical Kit-Kats,' 1896, Mr. Edmund Gosse thus describes his first meeting with Stevenson:

It is nearly a quarter of a century since I first saw Stevenson. In the autumn of 1870, in company with a former school-fellow, I was in the Hebrides. We had been wandering in the Long Island, as they name the outer archipelago, and our steamer, returning, called at Skye. At the pier of Portree, I think a company came on board—'people of importance in their day,' Edinburgh acquaintances, I suppose, who had accidentally met

in Skye on various errands. At all events, they invaded our modest vessel with a loud sound of talk. Professor Blackie was among them, a famous figure that calls for no description; and a voluble, shaggy man, clad in homespun, with spectacles forward upon nose, who, it was whispered to us, was Mr. Sam Bough, the Scottish Academician, a water-colour painter of some repute, who was to die in 1878. There were also several engineers of prominence. At the tail of this chatty, jesting little crowd of invaders came a youth of about my own age, whose appearance, for some mysterious reason, instantly attracted me. He was tall, preternaturally lean, with longish hair, and as restless and questing as a spaniel. The party from Portree fairly took possession of us; at meals they crowded around the captain, and we common tourists sat silent, below the salt. The stories of Blackie and Sam Bough were resonant. Meanwhile, I knew not why, I watched the plain, pale lad who took the lowest place in this privileged company.

First meeting with Edmund Gosse.

The summer of 1870 remains in the memory of western Scotland as one of incomparable splendour. Our voyage, especially as evening drew on, was like an emperor's progress. We stayed on deck till the latest moment possible, and I occasionally watched the lean youth, busy and serviceable, with some of the little tricks with which we were later on to grow familiar—the advance with hand on hip, the sidewise bending of the head to listen. Meanwhile darkness overtook us, a wonderful halo of moonlight swam up over Glenelg, the indigo of the peaks of the Cuchullins faded into the general blue night. I went below, but was presently aware of some change of course, and then of an unexpected stoppage. I tore on deck, and found that we had left our track among the islands, and had steamed up a narrow and unvisited fiord of the mainland—I think Loch Nevis. The sight was curious and bewildering. We lay in a gorge of blackness, with only a strip of the blue moonlit sky overhead; in the dark a few lanterns jumped about the shore, carried by agitated but unseen and soundless persons. As I leaned over the bulwarks, Stevenson was at my side, and he explained to me that we had come up this loch to take away to Glasgow a large party of emigrants driven from their homes

in the interests of a deer-forest. As he spoke, a black mass became visible entering the vessel. Then, as we slipped off shore, the fact of their hopeless exile came home to these poor fugitives, and suddenly, through the absolute silence, there rose from them a wild keening and wailing, reverberated by the cliffs of the loch, and at that strange place and hour infinitely poignant. When I came on deck next morning, my unnamed friend was gone. He had put off with the engineers to visit some remote lighthouse of the Hebrides.

From an article by Mrs. J. E. H. (Alice) Gordon in the *Bookman*, January 1895:

Sometime in the seventies Robert Louis Stevenson came with his mother and took up his abode for a summer at the romantic little inn at the foot of Box Hill, known as the Burford Arms. At that time we were living about ten minutes' walk from the little hostel, and among our most honoured and best beloved friends was the sage of Box Hill, George Meredith. A publisher friend wrote to us from London and begged my mother to make the acquaintance of Mr. Louis Stevenson, requesting her if possible to invite him to meet George Meredith. Thus it came to pass that Robert Louis Stevenson, then entirely unknown to fame, would occasionally drop into our garden and sit at the feet of the philosopher and listen with rapt attention and appreciative smiles to his conversation.

First meeting with George Meredith.

I well remember the eager, listening face of the student Stevenson, and remember his frank avowal that from henceforth he should enrol himself 'a true-blue Meredith man.' He was an inspiring listener, and had the art of drawing out the best of Mr. Meredith's brilliant powers of conversation, so that those were halcyon days. Though preferring to listen, Mr. Stevenson would speak of Dumas, Hazlitt, Defoe, Congreve, and a host of other writers and creators of fiction with enthusiasm and with that artistic appreciation of their various and differing qualities which is only possible to a workman in the same craft. . . .

My sister, I remember, was much interested in Stevenson, and even in those early days expected great things from him in

the future. And I well remember her satisfaction one afternoon, when, after he had taken his departure from our circle, and one of us was idly wondering why our friend, the publisher, was so hopeful about young Stevenson's future, Mr. Meredith trumpeted down our feeble utterances by informing us that some day he felt sure we should all be proud to have known him, and prophesied success and fame for him in the future. I was not so discriminating, and remember when 'Treasure Island,' 'Virginibus Puerisque,' and his other masterpieces appeared, feeling surprised that they should be the work of the silent and, truth to tell, rather dejected-looking youth who had lodged with his mother in our neighbourhood for a short space of time, and whose highest merit in my eyes had been his enthusiastic appreciation of George Meredith's writings and conversation.

Yet I can remember two of Mr. Stevenson's sayings that struck me at the time, and have in consequence remained in my memory ever since. One day he wandered in, and with a desolate expression of countenance remarked that he was having a bad time with his heroine. He said, 'She is turning ugly on my hands. It is no use my saying she is beautiful and charming and fascinating, and that everybody in the book is falling in love with her—it is unconvincing, and I feel the reader won't believe it, and I don't know what to do.' The exact words, I fear, I do not accurately remember, but that, at any rate, was the substance of his observation. And I remember how delighted he was when his confession drew from George Meredith a treatise on heroines in general, and his own in particular. . . .

One other day, I remember, we were talking of our dislike to prigs as heroes in books, and Mr. Stevenson said, 'An aspirant novelist should always comprehend that if in the first two or three chapters of books readers are convinced that the hero cannot by any possibility do or think anything wrong, or commit even the smallest indiscretion, the authors have given themselves away, and by no possibility can readers be any more interested in the adventures and fortunes of such immaculate but unattractive characters.'

Mr. Will Low, the painter, told recently a story of the Latin

Quarter days of Robert Louis Stevenson. Low and Stevenson were great friends in their youth; their friendship, indeed, continued up to the time of the writer's death.

'Louis,' said the artist, 'was no less diplomatic than brave. He could be fiery, and he could also be gracious and pacific. One night, I remember, we sat in a garden in Montmartre. The red wine had been flowing pretty freely, and one of our party got heated and aggressive.

A Latin Quarter Reminiscence.

'Finally some one said a thing that a fighting chap disliked. As soon as the words were spoken, he grabbed up a bottle and hurled it at the other's head. It was a strong, true shot, and would have hit the mark had not Stevenson sprung to his feet and caught the missile.

'"Tut, tut, George," he said to the thrower, "tut, tut. If the bottle is passed so quickly, none of us will be able to stand out the evening."'—*New York Tribune*, January 1903.

Mr. Edmund Gosse, who was introduced to R. L. S. at the Savile Club by Mr. Sidney Colvin about the end of 1876, was an intimate friend of Stevenson to the end of his life, and thus knew him in his days of literary obscurity as well as in the time of his fame and fortune. Stevenson when in London was a constant visitor at the home of Mr. Gosse, and the latter visited him in Scotland, though he never managed to see him at Bournemouth nor, like most of his European friends, did he ever enjoy the rare good fortune of shaking hands with him again after he had sailed away from his native land in the *Ludgate Hill*. Mr. Gosse thinks that those who have written of Stevenson in his later days do not give sufficient prominence to the gaiety of the man.

'Life at Twenty-five.'

It was his cardinal quality in those early days (says Mr. Gosse in the 'Critical Kit-Kat' paper already quoted). A childlike mirth leaped and danced in him; he seemed to skip upon the hills of life. He was simply bubbling with quips and

jests; his inherent earnestness or passion about abstract things was incessantly relieved by jocosity; and when he had built one of his intellectual castles in the sand, a wave of humour was certain to sweep in and destroy it. I cannot, for the life of me, recall any of his jokes; and written down in cold blood, they might not be funny if I did. They were not wit so much as humanity, the many-sided outlook upon life. I am anxious that his laughter-loving mood should not be forgotten, because later on it was partly, but I think never wholly, quenched by ill-health, responsibility, and the advance of years. He was often, in the old days, excessively and delightfully silly—silly with the silliness of an inspired schoolboy; and I am afraid that our laughter sometimes sounded ill in the ears of age. . . .

Stevenson was not without a good deal of innocent oddity in his dress. Whey I try to conjure up his figure, I can see only a slight, lean lad, in a suit of blue sea-cloth, a black shirt, and a wisp of yellow carpet that did duty for a necktie. This was long his attire, persevered in to the anguish of his more conventional acquaintances. I have a ludicrous memory of going, in 1878, to buy him a new hat, in company with Mr. Lang, the thing then upon his head having lost the very semblance of a human article of dress. Aided by a very civil shopman, we suggested several hats and caps, and Louis at first seemed interested; but having at last hit upon one which appeared to us pleasing and decorous, we turned for a moment to inquire the price. We turned back, and found that Louis had fled, the idea of parting with the shapeless object having proved too painful to be entertained. . . .

In those early days he suffered many indignities on account of his extreme youthfulness of appearance and absence of self-assertion. He was at Inverness,—being five or six and twenty at the time,—and had taken a room in a hotel. Coming back about dinner-time, he asked the hour of *table d'hôte*, whereupon the landlady said, in a motherly way: 'Oh, I knew you wouldn't like to sit in there among the grown-up people, so I've had a place put for you in the bar.' There was a frolic at the Royal Hotel, Bathgate, in the summer of 1879. Louis was lunching alone, and the maid, considering him a negligible quantity, came and leaned out of the window. This outrage on the proprieties

was so stinging that Louis at length made free to ask her, with irony, what she was doing there. 'I 'm looking for my lad,' she replied. 'Is that he?' asked Stevenson, with keener sarcasm. 'Weel, I 've been lookin' for him a' my life, and I 've never seen him yet,' was the response. Louis was disarmed at once, and wrote her on the spot some beautiful verses in the vernacular. 'They 're no bad for a beginner,' she was kind enough to say when she had read them.

III

HIS FIRST VISIT TO AMERICA, AND HIS MARRIAGE

On August 7, 1879, Stevenson sailed from the Clyde in the steamship 'Devonia' to New York. He had met in France an American lady, and fallen in love with her. His father objected to the proposed marriage; but the young author was resolute and went away shadowed by his father's disapproval. His early days in America were full of trial and hardship. On May 19, 1880, he was married to Fanny Van de Grift, in California. From this point Stevenson's literary career may be said properly to have begun.

The following article is reprinted from the New York *Bookbuyer* of February 1896. The name of the writer is Louis Evan Shipman:

First Landing in New York.

In some recent memories Mr. Gosse recalls the showery April[1] day Stevenson passed in London just previous to setting forth for the first time on his journey to the West; and Stevenson himself has recorded the dreary wetness of the day of his arrival at Castle Garden. It was on a Sunday afternoon, late in April, that he and his fellow-passengers of the second cabin were allowed to disembark from the old *Devonia*. 'It rained miraculously,' he says, 'and from that moment, till on the following night I left New York, there was scarce a lull and no cessation in the downpour.' Stevenson placed himself under the tutelage of one of

[1] The writer is obviously mistaken as to the season of the year when Stevenson landed in New York. August is the month given by Mr. Graham Balfour in the 'Life.'—ED.

his ship companions named Jones, and shortly after six o'clock found himself issuing into West Street, on some straw in the bottom of an open baggage-wagon. The character of this vehicle and its owner need no description; there are numberless such at every steamship pier waiting to prey upon the unwary. The Amateur Emigrant in his innocence says: 'It took us but a few moments, though it cost a good deal of money, to be taken along West Street to our destination, Reunion House, No. 10.' From personal observation I should say that from Castle Garden to No. 10 West Street is very little over a hundred yards; and it would give me much personal satisfaction to meet the freebooter who had the audacity to charge the simple Scotsmen 'a good deal of money' for carting them in so ridiculous a manner so ridiculous a distance.

Stevenson has told of the reception given him by Michael Mitchell, then the proprietor of Reunion House; and he speaks of it with such feeling that it is not hard to conceive of the pleasure it gave to so desolate a landing in a strange land. There is a bit of irony, though, in the fact that the only welcome and God-speed Stevenson had on his first visit to us was given him by a kindly Irish lodging-house keeper. Three years after entertaining the angel unawares, Mitchell left Reunion House, which was then leased by one Michael Bullins; and it is still owned nominally by him, though in reality by a stepson, Patrick O'Halloran, to whom has also descended the house's tradition of cordiality.

One day early last spring I pushed my way down West Street from Cortlandt, through the noonday groups of longshoremen and dock idlers, past numberless warehouses, seamen's furnishing shops, markets, fishstands and groggeries, and at last came to a halt before No. 10, 'an humble hostelry' indeed, as it impressed Stevenson, with its two stories of brick and unpretentious entry. I went through the open door, down two or three steps, and found myself in the bar-room; a sandy floored apartment, with a small counter on one side, and a settle and chairs on the other. The walls were given up to the lithographs of rival breweries, lists of steamship sailings; and in a conspicuous corner, a target proclaimed itself the property of the P. J. O'Halloran Rifles of the First Ward. Mr. O'Halloran himself

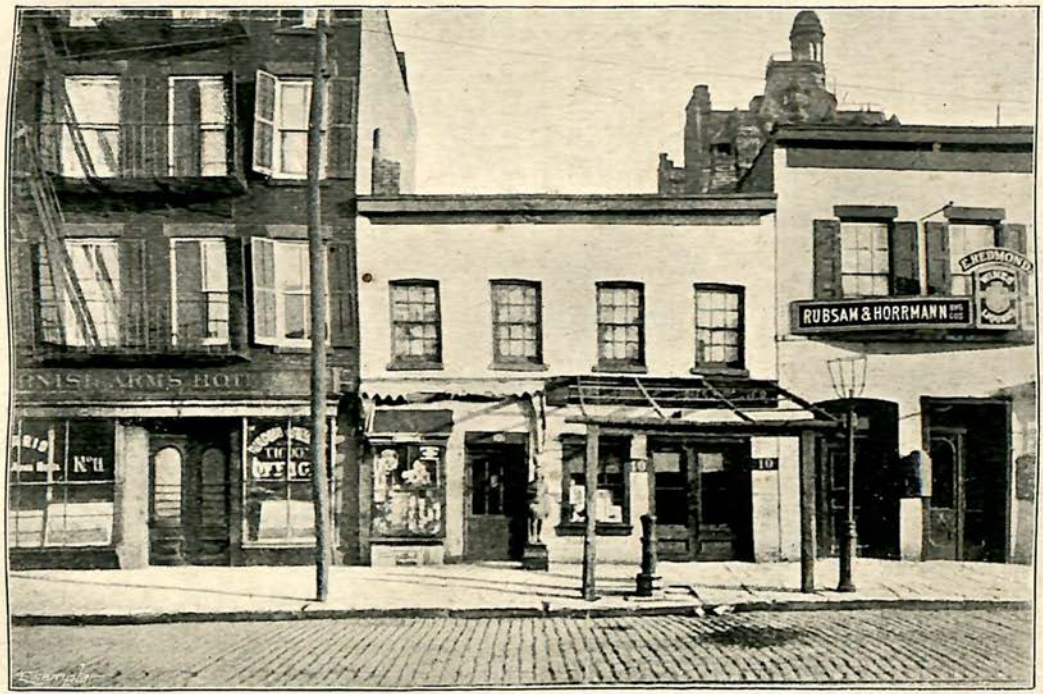
stood at his counter, and after he comprehended what I wished to see, and why, he did all the honours of his house like 'an honest and obliging landlord,' as Stevenson has written down his predecessor, Mitchell.

He led the way, first, up a pair of steep, narrow stairs to the room where Stevenson passed so uncomfortable a night. I recognised it by its 'borrowed lights; one looking into the passage, and the second opening, without sash, into another apartment'; no other room in the house having this peculiar mode of ventilation. It was nothing more than a closet, but the bed looked comfortable, the linen fresh, and cleanliness dominated everything. Yet it was a sorry place for the gentle young Scot to pass his first lonesome night among strangers in a strange city. O'Halloran led the way downstairs again, and into a crowded storeroom piled high with nondescript luggage, one corner of which was given up to a washstand and its accessories. Among them I am sure I recognised the 'pair of questionable combs.'

We retraced our steps to the bar-room, and thence went two rooms back into the kitchen, where, with a heavy heart, Stevenson had left his wet clothes 'a pulp in the middle of a pool' on the floor, after his tramp around town through the rainy streets. I half expected to see them lying there, limp, mute testimonials of their owner's visit (he himself wrote, 'I wonder if they are dry by now?') but no trace of them was to be seen, and soon after I took my leave.

To all lovers of Stevenson who have the opportunity, I recommend a visit to the little house that entertained him on that stormy Sunday night in '79. It brings to one, perhaps more than anything else could, a pervading sense of the man's simplicity and contentment with simple things, and his complete independence of the non-essentials of life.

'An Unpublished Chapter in the Life of Robert Louis Stevenson' was the heading of a paper by Mr. Howard Wilford Bell in the *Pall Mall Magazine* of June 1901. After telling the story of Stevenson's passionate pilgrimage to the West in the autumn of 1879, his illness at an Angora goat-ranche, eighteen miles from Monterey,



NO. 10 WEST STREET, NEW YORK

and his subsequent stay at that little mountain town in the late autumn of the year, Mr. Bell writes:

In a desultory fashion Stevenson became a 'reporter' on the Monterey *Californian*, at a salary of two dollars a week. An issue or two of this precious paper was sent to his most intimate English friend, with the comment that 'the works of R. L. S.' were on their way from California. The package never reached its destination. 'On the whole, his work was not thought up to Californian standards,' says Mr. Colvin, with cutting irony.

Dark Days in California.

Late in December, Stevenson arrived in San Francisco, and in the spring of the following year he was given a 'job'—the transaction did not even rise to the dignity of 'obtaining a position'—in the city department of the San Francisco *Chronicle*. With this he began a brief but hardly promising reportorial career, which was to be numbered by days. His first assignment was to 'cover' a holiday jollification arranged by the Salvation Army for the entertainment of the very poor and their children.

Stevenson wrote a gorgeous story, in which all the information bearing on the local aspect of the festival was carefully ignored. It was just such a piece of work as might have been expected from the man who was to write 'Virginibus Puerisque.' It treated of the theory of giving and of the blessedness of giving to children, it was a special pleading for the virtue of unselfishness, it was a rhapsody on the Beatitudes, it was everything desirable, but it was not 'a newspaper story.' It was a hopeless tissue of platitudes, so far as the requirements of the city editor were concerned; and that proverbially fretful person acrimoniously asked his new reporter, who stood before him, long, gangling, ill-dressed, starved-looking, if he knew where the festival had been held, who the committee-men in charge were, and if he had a list of the merchants who had provided the presents for the children. To these reasonable questions Stevenson replied that he had not thought such details at all worth while. A brisk young police reporter was hurriedly sent out for a few facts concerning the matter, and Stevenson was told

that his 'copy' would probably prove available for a Sunday 'special.'

Stevenson's second reportorial 'detail' proved even less fortunate. He was told one evening by the city editor that he should go to the Presidio (a military post) next morning and secure the facts relative to the installation of a new and extensive system of waterworks. The reporter replied with much ease of manner, that he had an engagement for the next day which would prevent him from going to the Presidio. The city editor thereupon exercised his well-worn prerogative by incontinently discharging the young man, accompanying his edict with a running fire of editorial profanity. It does not appear that Stevenson ever again undertook the *rôle* of reporter. He continued to write articles for the Sunday edition of the *Chronicle*, but there is no indication that he thought affectionately of them, for he never rescued them from the files.

The young Scotchman's life in San Francisco covered a period of four months, and embraced perhaps the most miserable days of his life. Physically he was in a distressing condition. Financially he was on the dismal edge of despair. He went from doctor to doctor, seeking treatment on credit, and was turned away by all. During the winter he was reduced by these refusals to the humiliation of asking for medicine and advice at the municipal free dispensary. The illness which overtook him in the spring of 1880 almost 'doused his faint glim.'

The grim horror and irony of the cruel circumstances are accentuated when one recalls that at this very period Stevenson was toiling like a worker in fine metals over several of those rare verbal fabrics which were to delight his race. The 'Amateur Emigrant' had been sent in manuscript to his friend and counsellor, Mr. Sidney Colvin, only to be returned, riddled with merciless criticism. Some of the best and most characteristic work which was to come from his pen was either actually under way or shaping itself in his mind; and the stress of composition was supported by a diet which would have been the death of any man not sustained by an inexhaustible nervous force. . . .

The exile's lodging was in a workman's resort in a mean section of the city. For this he paid six shillings the week. He worked by candle-light, and ate, when he could eat anywhere, at

'Joe's coffee-house,' an eating-stall kept by an Italian, and now patronised—at least once—by all lovers of Stevenson who visit San Francisco. His breakfast was a roll, a cup of coffee, and a pat of butter, which cost him fivepence. Dinner, when he was prosperous, cost two shillings, and was a *table d'hôte*. Supper was a repetition of breakfast; the cup of coffee being sometimes replaced by a bowl of soup. As poverty pinched closer he experimented with his viands. A doughnut was tried in the place of the rolls, and when the *table d'hôte* dinner was beyond his means, a bowl of soup was made to serve the purpose of the midday dinner. . . .

He was a touching sight in those piteous days. His face was ghastly in its pallor, his clothes seemed to have been flung upon him, and his trousers and shoetops disagreed by at least two inches. Men were seen to jump at the sound of his cough and to rub their eyes at the first sight of him. His manner towards his equals betrayed a conscious superiority—or, perhaps, it was only a lack of sympathy—and he was awkward to a degree. It is evident that association with a sympathetic man-friend would have meant a great deal to him; but he did not seek friends, and the newspaper men, who, as a class, are apt to become calloused by their disillusions, avoided the queer, silent Scotchman, who was, unless all signs were at fault, a stranded fakir. . . .

San Francisco failed to help Stevenson in his hour of bitterest need, but since his death it has raised a pretty monument to his memory in Portsmouth Square, where he loved to lounge on sunny days. 'Joe's coffee-house' is haunted daily by people who feel a belated and vinous grief for him. Many persons can tell pleasant stories about him—all but 'Joe,' who frankly confesses he hasn't the least remembrance of the gentleman, and wonders why people should be so keen to learn at just what table a forgotten patron used to sit.

In the darkest days came parental forgiveness for this wilful flight westward, expressed in the trite cablegram: 'Count on £250 annually.' The sunnier month of June brought to Stevenson the happiness of marriage with the woman of his choice. Setting their faces towards the mountains, they bade farewell to the fogs and chill winds of the seaport. Their new home was at Juan Silverado, a deserted mining-camp on Mount

Saint Helena. Through the grape-ripening months of June and July, Stevenson and his wife and stepson lived in the old brown house so affectionately described in 'Silverado Squatters.'

From the *Times*, July 2, 1901 :

San Francisco Editor's Story.

We have received from Mr. John P. Young, managing editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, a letter with reference to an article in the *Pall Mall Magazine* for June, called 'An Unpublished Chapter in the Life of Robert Louis Stevenson,' written by Mr. Howard Wilford Bell. Mr. Young says:—'The part of Mr. Bell's article regarding which I am able to speak with positiveness is that in which he states with some circumstantiality that Robert Louis Stevenson, late in December 1879, arrived in San Francisco, and in the spring of the following year was "given a job" in the city department of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, which he performed in such an unsatisfactory manner that the item he was assigned to write had to be given to another reporter to put into English suitable to the readers of the paper and the latitude of California; and that later "he continued to write articles for the Sunday edition of the *Chronicle*, but there is no indication that he thought affectionately of them, for he never rescued them from the files." Both these statements are absolutely false. I was managing editor of the *Chronicle* at the time, and personally knew every reporter, whether on the regular staff or doing merely detail work. I also read and accepted all the manuscripts published in the *Chronicle* during the period mentioned, and can assert with positiveness that the *Chronicle* was never honoured by the offer of one from Mr. Stevenson. I do not trust to my memory solely on this point, but have caused the account-books of the *Chronicle* to be carefully examined, and no trace of Mr. Stevenson's name can be found in them. Had he worked a single day for the paper, or contributed an article or articles, there would be a record of the fact, for the affairs of the *Chronicle* are methodically managed. To make assurance doubly sure, however, I have questioned the then city editor of the *Chronicle* and others who were on the staff of the paper in 1879 and

1880, and they all unite in saying that there is absolutely no foundation for the statements I am here denying, as they have already been denied in the columns of the *Chronicle*. I wish to add something that should be conclusive on this point. The *Chronicle*, like most journals, tries to make the most of such facts as the connection of distinguished writers. Does any one suppose for a moment that if Robert Louis Stevenson had been a contributor to the paper that we should not have been proud to dwell on the fact?'

An Impression by C. Warren Stoddard.

Mr. Charles Warren Stoddard, Professor of English Literature at the Catholic University of Washington, D.C., U.S.A., since 1887, was one of the American friends whom Stevenson found during his first visit to the United States. Professor Stoddard wrote several papers in *Kate Field's Washington* at the time of Stevenson's death. From one of these this description of the impression made on him by his first meeting with the young writer is taken:

Soon after Stevenson's arrival in California we met. The happy hour brought us together in the studio of an artist friend. There, with a confusion of canvases for a background, and an audience as clever as limited, all things were possible save only the commonplace, and, in the prevailing atmosphere—an atmosphere not unpleasantly tinged with Bohemianism—the situation easily became spectacular.

There I heard him discourse; there I saw him literally *rise* to the occasion and, striding to and fro with leonine tread, toss back his lank locks and soliloquise with the fine frenzy of an Italian improvisatore. We were all on our mettle. I am inclined to think that every one was at his best—I mean that he was keyed up to concert-pitch—while in the presence of that inspiring man. He was so entirely master of himself and of the situation that each listener was on the alert, and thus unconsciously assumed his pleasantest expression. It is not unlikely that the exceptional brilliancy of the rhetorical Stevenson dared his guest to unaccustomed efforts, and that in consequence he

achieved an intellectual spurt that, though brief, was brave enough, and astonished no one so much as himself when he came to weigh it complacently in comfortable recollection. I wonder how many entirely harmless people have been led to think very pleasantly of themselves after an interview with such a man as was Robert Louis Stevenson? I don't believe that he ever wilfully belittled any one who didn't richly deserve it; no, not even in an irritable moment. Let us hope for all our sakes that he was tempted alike as we are.

At the time I first knew him, Stevenson's itinerary was very limited; he usually travelled from his couch to his lounge, possibly touching at the arm-chair on the way. Those who are acquainted with 'A Child's Garden of Verses' will see the delightful possibilities of this prescribed journey in such company. I am writing of a period now nearly seventeen years past. For a long time his tours were not greatly varied; with him it was nearly the same daily routine with an occasional change of horizon. His familiars grew to think of him and to look upon him as being but a disembodied intellect; his was the rare kind of personality that inspires in the susceptible heart a deep though passionless love. I take him to have been the last man in the world to awaken or invite passion.

In his own select circle, necessarily a very limited one, he was reverenced, and it does not seem in the least surprising that there should have been found those who were glad to gather at his knee in worshipful silence while he, in an exalted state of spirituality, read and expounded the Scriptures with rabbinical gravity.

I have visited him in a lonely lodging—it was previous to his happy marriage—and found him submerged in billows of bedclothes; about him floated the scattered volumes of a complete set of Thoreau; he was preparing an essay on that worthy, and he looked at the moment like a half-drowned man—yet he was not cast down. His work, an endless task, was better than a straw to him. It was to become his life preserver and to prolong his years. I feel convinced that without it he must have surrendered long since.

I found Stevenson a man of the frailest physique, though most unaccountably tenacious of life; a man whose pen was

indefatigable, whose brain was never at rest, who, as far as I am able to judge, looked upon everybody and everything from a supremely intellectual point of view. His was a superior organisation that seems never to have been tainted by things common or unclean; one more likely to be revolted than appealed to by carnality in any form. A man unfleshy to the verge of emaciation; and, in this connection, I am not unmindful of a market in flesh-pots not beneath the consideration of sanctimonious speculators; but here was a man whose sympathies were literary and artistic; whose intimacies were born and bred above the ears.

Romance of his Marriage.

The following pages appear in a little volume of 'Stevensoniana' issued by Mr. M. F. Mansfield of New York in 1900. They are here given as they stand, although only in part do they naturally come within the scope of the present chapter. This little note from R. L. S. to Miss M. C. Smith, the writer of the article, is very characteristic:

DEAR MADAM,—It is impossible to be more gracefully penitent: I give you leave to buy ——'s triple piracy in the —— library; and this permission is withheld from all other living creatures, so that you alone will possess that publication without sin.—I am, dear Madam, yours truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

March 1887.

When Mr. Stevenson was at Saranac in the Adirondacks, I sent him a short editorial on his Brownies that I had written for the Boston *Daily Advertiser*, and also a letter, saying that I owed him one dollar. I professed penitence for having bought a pirated copy of 'Dr. Jekyll' for 25 cents, and promised to make good the deficit if I ever met him. He sent me the letter above.

In May, eleven years later, Miss Louise Imogen Guiney invited me to meet her friend, Mrs. Virgil Williams, to be told—for print—the true story of the Stevenson marriage. I was unable to go to meet Mrs. Williams at the time appointed, but a day or two later she came by Miss Guiney's introduction to an

editorial desk where I had been for eight years in the office of the Boston *Evening Transcript*, and gave me certain facts, from which the article below was written. It appeared in the *Transcript*, May 18, 1898. MINNA CAROLINE SMITH.

BOSTON, *June* 5, 1900.

Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson, who has been ill in New York, has recovered, and has gone to England for an indefinite stay. It is, however, her purpose to make her home again ultimately in San Francisco. Her presence in England is necessary, as Mr. Sidney Colvin is now engaged in writing the 'Life of Stevenson,' and depends upon Mrs. Stevenson for aid in compilation, and in deciding what shall be said and what shall be left out. A great deal has been said about the Stevensons which might much better have been left unsaid, for the simple reason that it is not true. Like the old story of Phillips Brooks and the boy with the 'Episcopalian Kittens,' some of the truthless tales are harmless. Others are less innocuous than the imaginative yarns which are always likely to be current about any bright personality, any 'shining mark,' like Stevenson and his accomplished wife.

Now that he is dead, and Mrs. Stevenson has gone to his native Britain, it is well to deny authoritatively the absurd story, which has often been revived during the past twenty years, that Mrs. Stevenson's first husband, Mr. Osbourne, gave her away in marriage on the day of her wedding to Robert Louis Stevenson, and that Stevenson afterwards fraternised with his predecessor. As a matter of fact, Stevenson never in his life even saw the father of Lloyd Osbourne, who was about fourteen years of age at the time of his mother's marriage to the famous Scot. The father of Stevenson, an old-time Presbyterian gentleman, made Lloyd Osbourne his heir, thus wholly welcoming his beloved daughter-in-law in the family, where she and her children have found happiness, and where they gave so much. It is advisedly said that the elder Stevenson made Lloyd Osbourne his heir, his property to be that of his son's stepchild after the death of his son and that son's wife. It is well known that Stevenson's mother was with his family in Samoa, and this dignified and conservative lady also followed the custom of the

country, which the family followed, in homely phrase, 'going bare-footed' at home. Pictures of Stevenson in his Samoa home, enjoying the freedom of this native fashion, have been common enough. This Samoan custom seemed simple and natural to any one who saw the Stevensons in Samoa going without shoes and stockings, quite as summer girls on the Massachusetts shore have gone about without gloves or hats during recent years, an unconventionality which would once have shocked thousands. The matter would not be worth mentioning, but a curious myth about Mrs. Stevenson has sprung from it. A paragraph has been floating through contemporaries in several cities of late, to the effect that Mrs. Stevenson went out to dine in London, when first introduced there by her husband, without shoes and stockings. This little yarn really denies itself on the face of it. As a matter of fact, Mrs. Stevenson's conformity to social customs has never been found insufficient wherever she has been. She is a woman of original talents and great adaptability of talent who, for many years, was the nurse, the 'guide, philosopher, and friend,' as well as the beloved wife of the child of genius whose name she bears. She was studying art in Paris, where she had gone with her three children, when she first met Robert Louis Stevenson, who was among the artists and literary folk at Barbizon. She returned to America with her daughter and her son—one son had died while she was in France—and readily got a divorce from Mr. Osbourne. No word concerning the father of her children has ever been uttered for publication by Mrs. Stevenson, nor ever will be. He married a second time and, after a while, left his wife and disappeared. He has since been seen in South Africa. It is here repeated that Robert Louis Stevenson never saw him. Mrs. Stevenson wished to delay her second marriage for a year, but Stevenson had travelled over land and sea to California, and was ill and homesick. So, by the advice of a close friend, the marriage was not long postponed. This friend was Mrs. Virgil Williams, wife of the well-known teacher of painting in San Francisco, the founder of that pioneer art school of the West, which, since Mr. Williams's death, was munificently endowed by Mr. Searles as the Hopkins Institute. Mrs. Williams went with the pair to the house of Dr. Scott, a

Presbyterian minister of San Francisco, who married Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson. Nobody else was present at the private wedding, except Mrs. Scott, the wife of the minister. This divine made Stevenson a present of a religious book of his own writing to read on the journey to Scotland, and the whimsical fear of Stevenson that he might not read it all while crossing the continent and the Atlantic was characteristic. But if he felt that this was not sufficiently light reading for a steamer journey he appreciated the gift, and in return sent Dr. Scott a book on a like topic written by his father in Scotland.[1]

'People are very much like folks'; the fairy tales which are told about the famous are very likely to need large grains of salt in the taking. The simple truth about the Stevensons was that theirs was a peculiarly fortunate and happy marriage, and that if they lived in Bohemia it was 'on the airy uplands' of that land, where freedom of personal action never meant wilful foolish eccentricity or lack of conformity to the canons of true courtesy and kindness.

[1] Probably *Christianity confirmed by Jewish and Heathen Testimony and the Deductions of Physical Science.* Edinburgh, D. Douglas, 1879.

IV

STEVENSON'S FIRST NOVEL

Anticipating our chronology a little, it will be well to introduce here a series of important items touching the writing of 'Treasure Island' and Stevenson's life at Braemar during August and September 1881.

Mr. W. E. Henley wrote on 'Some Novels of 1899' in the *North American Review*, February 1900, and in the course of his article made this reference to Stevenson's first long story:

Mr. Henley's Version.

The late R. L. Stevenson began, as we all remember, as a kind of literary cherub: he wrote delightful essays on morals; he was responsible for books of sentimental travel, which are a joy to the memory and to the mind; he had a public of his own, which believed and rejoiced in him, and said so. But he felt that he was, as I have said, a literary cherub—a head and a pair of wings, with nothing to sit down upon; he hated the idea; he longed to be something more than the darling of a literary set; and in the end, a good genius appearing in the person of Dr. Japp, he got his chance, and he planted 'Treasure Island' on a journal called (if I mistake not) *Young Folks' Paper*. 'Twas a capital print of its kind, and its editor and proprietor (his name was Henderson: a Scotchman and a radical: I rather think that he is dead; but, dead or alive, he is a person for whom I have a very great respect) was a very able and intelligent man; but the public to which it was addressed was inconceivably larger and less lettered than any to which Stevenson had hitherto appealed.

But 'Treasure Island' suited his journal—so he thought—to a nicety; he did his best for it; and when Billy Bones, and Pew, and Captain Silver had 'done their pitch,' he commissioned 'The Black Arrow' for it; and when that had gone the way of all serials, he gave to it the first of David Balfour and Alan Breck. The result was at once illuminating and strange. I do not know that Stevenson, the story-teller, ever did better than he did in at least two of these three tales. Yet his public would none of him; his public, drenched and drugged with imitations of Marryat and Mayne Reid—with 'Jack Harkaway the Mid,' and 'Miguel the Marksman,' or 'The Gitano of Puerto del Sol'—received his advances with a chastened air of doubt, and considered his effects with a most 'austere regard of control.' In brief, he was but a *succès d'estime*; and you would have thought that he had worked in vain. But he had not. The masters who wrought for *Young Folks' Paper* were (so Stevenson told me) in no wise model citizens; they had their weaknesses, and (on his editor's report) were addicted to the use of strong waters, so that they had to be literally hunted for their copy. But, being writers, they were a level or two above the public for which they wrote. That public had seen little or nothing in Stevenson; it saw a great deal in his imitators, and, in the long-run, Stevenson had, I believe, a very considerable success with a circle of readers which began by politely disdaining him. He had paid in gold, and his gold was not recognised as current coin until it was turned into copper. The currency was debased? Of course it was; and if it had not been—here is my point—it would never have passed with that public which Stevenson tried, and failed, to win. And this is the way in which publics are, not made but, affected and influenced by talent. In Stevenson's case, the provocation was unusually direct, the effects were unusually gross.

The above note by Mr. Henley called forth the following letter from Mr. Robert Leighton to the *Academy*, March 3, 1900:

SIR,—The following notes on the original publication of 'Treasure Island' may help to resolve Mr. Henley's doubts.

The editor and proprietor of *Young Folks' Paper*, to whom

Mr. Henley refers in his article in the *North American Review*, was Mr. James Henderson. Mr. Henderson is not dead, as Mr. Henley 'rather thinks,' although *Young Folks' Paper* is long since defunct. The paper was started some thirty years ago as a juvenile offshoot from the same proprietor's prosperous *Weekly Budget*, and it bore originally the title *Our Young Folks' Weekly Budget*. At the time when 'Treasure Island' appeared in its columns it had become known as *Young Folks*. In subsequent stages of its career it passed successively under the names of *Young Folks' Paper* and *Old and Young*.

Editor of 'Young Folks'' Version.

It was Dr. Japp, I believe, who introduced Stevenson to Mr. Henderson. This was early in the year 1881. Mr. Henderson offered to take a story from the young Scotsman, and, as indicating the kind of story he desired for *Young Folks*, he gave to Stevenson copies of the paper containing a serial by Charles E. Pearse—a treasure-hunting story, entitled 'Billy Bo's'n.' In his 'My First Book' article in the *Idler*, Stevenson seems to suggest that 'Treasure Island' was already formed and planned in his mind prior to the time at which it was thought of as a serial for *Young Folks*; but there is evidence that in 'Billy Bo's'n' he found and adopted many suggestions and incidents for his own narrative.

As a result of his introduction to Mr. Henderson, Stevenson wrote his story of Jim Hawkins and Long John Silver, and sent it in with the title of 'The Sea Cook.' Mr. Henderson did not like the name 'The Sea Cook,' and took an editor's privilege of altering it to 'Treasure Island.' The first instalment was published on October 1, 1881. Stevenson's name was not on it: it was set forth as being by Captain George North, to convey the idea that it was the work of a mariner. It was not considered of great importance in the paper, for it occupied a second place to a serial called 'Don Zalva the Brave,' by Mr. Alfred R. Phillips, one of the 'masters' whom Mr. Henley refers to as being 'in no wise model citizens.' Only the first instalment was illustrated—by a rude woodcut representing Billy Bones chasing Black Dog out of the 'Admiral Benbow.' The subsequent seventeen instalments were foisted into the paper in driblets of two or three columns of small type.

Mr. Henley is right in his belief that 'Treasure Island' was as a serial a comparative failure. It certainly did not raise the circulation of *Young Folks* by a single copy. Far different, however, was the effect of 'The Black Arrow.' This story was written designedly, and again at the suggestion of Mr. Henderson, in the style of historical narrative which had proved so popular in the stories of Mr. Alfred Phillips. It appeared in *Young Folks* from June 30 to October 30, 1883, by 'Captain George North' again, and was enormously successful with boy readers, raising the circulation of the paper by many hundreds of copies a week.

I had myself the privilege of being editor of *Young Folks' Paper* at the time when Stevenson was living at Bournemouth, and I remember writing asking him for a new serial story in 1885. He agreed to write one, but demanded higher terms than those which had satisfied him in the cases of 'Treasure Island' and 'The Black Arrow.' 'You must pay me not less than thirty shillings a column,' he wrote. The columns, I may say, contained each about 1200 words. There was no haggling over terms such as these. Mr. Henderson, indeed, at once offered a considerably higher price for the work. The required story was frequently delayed, but at last it appeared as 'Kidnapped,' and ran serially in *Young Folks* from May to July 1886.

In preparing 'Treasure Island' for book publication, Stevenson did not alter much. Here and there he struck out a paragraph, here and there he added one. He softened down the boastfulness of Jim Hawkins's personal narrative, and Dr. Livesay, who was originally somewhat frivolous and familiar in his language, he made more staid, as became one of his profession. In only one instance was a chapter heading altered—'At the Sign of the Spy-Glass' being substituted for 'The Sea Cook,'—I am, etc.,

ROBERT LEIGHTON.

Dr. Alexander H. Japp, the veteran author and journalist, at the request of Mr. Sidney Colvin, wrote for publication in the *Academy* of March 1900 his account of the transaction. It was, in effect, a repetition of a contribution by him to the *Argosy* of

February 1895, but lacking some of the more personal touches which distinguished that article. For that reason the *Argosy* article is here quoted. It should be explained that Dr. Japp's connection with R. L. S. sprang from his taking exception to Stevenson's study of Thoreau when it appeared in the *Cornhill*, and Stevenson in his preface to 'Men and Books' refers to the incident in this graceful way: 'The Study, indeed, raised so much ire in the breast of Dr. Japp ('H. A. Page'), Thoreau's sincere and learned disciple, that had either of us been men, I please myself with thinking, of less temper and justice, the difference might have made us enemies instead of making us friends.' As it fell out, Stevenson invited his critic to visit him at Braemar, where he was staying in the autumn of 1881, and Dr. Japp describes his visit as follows:

Dr. Japp's Account of 'Treasure Island.'

I accordingly did go to Braemar, and for a little I was one in a delightful circle, where rare freedom was found, yet where rarest courtesy was practised. His wife and her son by a former marriage were also staying there with his father and mother. These were red-letter days in my calendar, alike on account of pleasant intercourse with his honoured father and himself. I threw down a little pen-portrait of Stevenson then, and fear I could hardly better it by elaboration. Here it is:—

'Not so tall, probably, as he seems at first from his *thinness*; the pose and air could not be otherwise described than as distinguished. Head of fine type, carried well on the shoulders, and in walking with the impression of being a little thrown back; long brown hair falling from under a broadish-brimmed Spanish form of soft felt hat, Rembrandtesque; loose kind of Inverness cape when walking, and invariable velvet jacket when inside the house. Face sensitive, full of expression, longish—especially when seen in profile; features a little irregular; brow high and broad. A hint of vagary, and just a hint in the expression, qualified by the eyes, frank and clear, but piercing, yet rest clearly on you with a kind of gentle radiance and

animation as he speaks. Romance, if with a *soupçon* of whimsicality, is marked on him—sometimes he has a look as of the Ancient Mariner, and would fix you with his glittering eye, as he points his sentences with a nervous movement of his thin, white forefinger, even when it holds the incessant cigarette. Faint suggestion of a hare-brained sentimental trace on his countenance, though controlled by Scotch sense and shrewdness. A favourite and characteristic attitude with him was to put his foot on a chair or stool and rest his elbow on his knee with his chin on his hand, as he listened; and to sit, or rather half sit, half lean, on the corner of a table or desk, one of his legs swinging freely, and when anything that tickled was said, he would laugh in the heartiest manner, despite, the risk of exciting his cough, which then much troubled him.'

And then the picture-gallery! This was the room devoted to Sam Lloyd Osbourne, his stepson, where we wrote and drew and painted—its walls covered with the most extravagant and grotesquely funny bits of work. On first entering it, I was putting some constraint on myself to restrain a laugh, when Stevenson, with his usual quickness, noting this, said, with a sly wink and a gentle dig in the ribs—'It's laugh and be thankful here.' On Lloyd's account, simple engraving materials, types, and a printing-press had been procured, and books of the oddest character were produced—all the family having more or less a hand in them. It was Stevenson's delight to work for hours together here with Lloyd, becoming a boy himself for the nonce. He drew and coloured a map, which he called 'Treasure Island,' and out of this grew the famous story. He had written the greater half of it when I went; and a chapter or so was read in the family circle every day, his father becoming deeply interested in it.

Delightfully suggestive and highly enjoyable were the meetings in the little drawing-room after dinner, when the contrasted traits of father and son came fully into play, when Louis would sometimes draw out a new view of things by bold half-paradoxical assertion, or compel advance on the point from a new quarter by a question casuistically couched, or reveal his own latent conviction finally by a few sentences as neatly-rounded as though they had been written, while he rose and gently

moved about as his habit was in the course of these more extended remarks. The greatest treat of all was the reading of 'The Sea-Cook.' It is one thing to read the printed page; it was quite another to hear Stevenson as he stood reading it aloud, with his hand stretched out, and his body gently swaying as a kind of rhythmical commentary. Mr. Stevenson, in his article in 'My First Book,' has told the whole story; how I carried off with me the first half of it and showed it to my friend Mr. James Henderson, who also was much taken with it, and published it in *Young Folks*.

In his letter to the *Academy*, Dr. Japp adds:

I had no connection whatever with Mr. James Henderson, whom I knew as coming from my own district in Scotland. I took the story to him—very proud, I confess, to be able to tell him that I had brought him 'a work of genius.' . . . Almost all the story passed through my hands to Mr. Henderson, who was never introduced to Stevenson by me in any formal sense; but getting, of course, into correspondence with Mr. Henderson about proofs, R. L. S. naturally called to see him early in the following summer as he passed through London to Bournemouth; when, on special terms offered by Mr. Henderson, he agreed to write 'The Black Arrow.' . . . Mr. Leighton, therefore, is quite wrong in his statement that Mr. Henderson offered to take a story from the young Scotsman, 'and gave him papers indicating the kind of story he wanted.' 'Treasure Island' was written absolutely for the sake of writing it, and in conformity with the map which R. L. S. had elaborately drawn and coloured in sympathetic competition with his clever stepson, as he himself tells in the *Idler* article; so that the statement that he found and adopted many incidents from 'Billy Bo's'n' is thus wholly met and disposed of. The alterations on the final book-form of 'Treasure Island' were really slight.

Mr. James Henderson wrote to the *Academy* of March 17, 1900, to endorse Dr. Japp's version of the transaction, 'as a correct statement of his connection with the original publication of "Treasure Island."' He also said:

Before the story commenced (October 1, 1881) in *Young Folks*,

Stevenson called on me, bringing the corrected proofs of the opening chapters, and it was at that interview—my first with him—I expressed my dislike to the title, 'The Sea Cook,' and suggested 'Treasure Island" (the name of the map), which he readily agreed to. The latter part of the story was written at Davos, Switzerland.

Mr. Edmund Gosse was one of the few friends who visited Stevenson at Braemar. In the chapter of personal memories in 'Critical Kit-Kats,' already quoted, he writes:

Mr. Gosse's Memory of Braemar.

To the Cottage, therefore, . . . I proceeded in the most violent storm of hail and rain that even Aberdeenshire can produce in August, and found Louis as frail as a ghost, indeed, but better than I expected. He had adopted a trick of stretching his thin limbs over the back of a wicker sofa, which gave him an extraordinary resemblance to that quaint insect, the praying mantis; but it was a mercy to find him out of bed at all. Among the many attractions of the Cottage, the presence of Mr. Thomas Stevenson—Louis's father—must not be omitted. He was then a singularly charming and vigorous personality, indignantly hovering at the borders of old age ('Sixty-three, sir, this year; and, deuce take it! am I to be called "an old gentleman" by a cab-driver in the streets of Aberdeen?') and, to my gratitude and delight, my companion in long morning walks. The detestable weather presently brought all the other members of the household to their beds, and Louis in particular became a wreck. However, it was a wreck that floated every day at nightfall; for at the worst he was able to come downstairs to dinner and spend the evening with us.

We passed the days with regularity. After breakfast I went to Louis's bedroom, where he sat up in bed, with dark, flashing eyes and ruffled hair, and we played chess on the coverlid. Not a word passed, for he was strictly forbidden to speak in the early part of the day. As soon as he felt tired—often in the middle of a game—he would rap with peremptory knuckles on the board as a signal to stop, and then Mrs. Stevenson or I

would arrange his writing materials on the bed. Then I would see no more of him till dinner-time, when he would appear, smiling and voluble, the horrid bar of speechlessness having been let down. Then every night, after dinner, he would read us what he had written during the day. I find in a note to my wife, dated October 3, 1881: 'Louis has been writing, all the time I have been here, a novel of pirates and hidden treasure, in the highest degree exciting. He reads it to us every night, chapter by chapter.' This, of course, was 'Treasure Island,' about the composition of which, long afterward, in Samoa, he wrote an account in some parts of which I think that his memory played him false. I look back to no keener intellectual pleasure than those cold nights at Braemar, with the sleet howling outside, and Louis reading his budding romance by the lamp-light, emphasising the purpler passages with lifted voice and gesticulating finger.

V

WORK AND PLAY AT DAVOS AND HYÈRES

Stevenson, accompanied by his wife and stepson, left California in July 1880, *and arrived on* 17*th August at Liverpool, where they were met by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Stevenson and Mr. Sidney Colvin. Stevenson was in very poor health as the result of his rough life in California, and in October had to hasten to Davos Platz for the winter, where his little party remained at the Hotel Belvedere until April* 1881. *June and July were spent at Pitlochry in Perthshire, and, as we have seen, the two following months at Braemar. They were back at Davos by October* 18*th, hiring a chalet for the winter. In May of the next year they returned to Edinburgh, and paid visits to different Scottish resorts during the summer, but in October they had taken a country house five miles from Marseilles—an unlucky move as it turned out—and by March of* 1883 *were settled in a villa of their own—La Solitude—at Hyères. They returned to England on the* 1*st of July* 1884.

'Stevenson among the Philistines' was the happy title which Mr. Harold Vallings gave to an article published in *Temple Bar*, February 1901, describing his meeting with Stevenson during a visit to Davos. The greater part of Mr. Vallings's paper is here reproduced:

One winter's night, some twenty years ago, the diligence, which in those days used to change its wheels for runners at Klosters, brought us through pitch darkness and a blinding snowstorm to the doors of the Belvedere Hotel at Davos. That same night, as it chanced, a small function took place in the hotel: to wit, the presentation of a birthday gift by two little children to a certain Mrs. Stevenson.

'Among the Philistines' at Davos.

Who was this Mrs. Stevenson? To that inquiry the Philistines made answer: 'She is the wife of a Mr. Stevenson, who has written something or other.'

The now famous Robert Louis Stevenson was then, it will be seen, simply 'a Mr. Stevenson.' . . . How did he impress us, the simple Philistines among whom he was sojourning for a space?

I believe he struck us, to begin with—for it is as well to confess one's sins openly and at once—as a rather odd, exotic, theatrical kind of man; a man framed somewhat on the model of one of Du Maurier's æsthetes. His personality had a tinge of that picturesqueness and Bohemianism which seldom fail to sharply impinge upon the prejudices of a true-born Briton. It is possible, too, that even his un-British courtesy of manner may have caused some misgivings. A want of bluntness on the part of one who addresses us for the first time, if he speaks our own tongue, is apt to cause qualms; a tendency to put any suavity into the curt commonplaces that we bark out half resentfully at each other, with a view to promoting an acquaintanceship, is to many of us an alarming symptom. . . .

One knew at once that he was, in Davosian parlance, 'lungy'—more 'lungy' even than the majority; but, though so obviously a member of the crock-company, he would, whenever he had an ounce of strength to spare, insist upon a place with the robust brigade. The latter were doing their tobogganing, the season being already far advanced, in the early morning, down slopes perfected by the action of a hard night-frost upon the sun-thaw of the previous day, and with them, often enough, went Stevenson—to the detriment of his feeble health, I fear, for I have a most vivid recollection of a first view of him homeward-bound from one of these before-breakfast expeditions. He was

dragging himself wearily along, towing a toboggan at his heels, his narrow hunched-up figure cut clear against the surpassing brilliance of the white Davosian world. With that pathetic, half-broken figure making so dominant a note in one's recollection, one marvels indeed at the fortitude that made possible his later achievements.

Through the closing weeks of that winter season it was my hap, through sheer good luck, fostered in some measure by a nascent enthusiasm for Art—to foregather pretty frequently with the courageous invalid, and only once do I remember his uttering a despondent word. 'I can't work,' he said to me one day. 'Yet now that I've fallen sick I've lost all my capacity for idleness.'

That one brief plaint of a chained genius has echoed long and sadly in one's memory.

The man was an artist to the marrow; it is a satisfaction to know that one appreciated so much at least at the first touch. His outlook all round was that of an artist, an ingrained Bohemian.

As he sat on the verandah of a morning in the sunshine of early March, with Hamley's 'Operations of War,' his study of the moment, on his knees, he would talk paint-and-canvas to one's heart's content; commenting vividly upon his Bohemian experiences in France, touching regretfully more than once upon that idyllic barge excursion which he had planned—abortively, as it turned out—in conjunction with half a dozen ardent brothers of the brush. Upon art questions, as upon any other, he was a delightful opponent; always keenly enthusiastic, always hotly eloquent, yet unfailingly tolerant and good-tempered. Between the friendly wrangles, the jargonings and anecdotes, he would stop to flatter a mere youngster, deprived by Fate of a beloved profession, by asking for his eminent judgment upon one of Hamley's maps or some technical point in the text.

He was reading 'Our Mutual Friend' at this time, and here again the core of genuine modesty that underlay his superficial vanities and apparent posings, was clearly evidenced. By misreading, as I ventured to assert, certain passages in the relations between Bella Wilfer and the Boffins, he had been led to inveigh unjustly against the author; but in this, as in all cases he

proved himself the pleasantest of 'opposites'; ending by re-reading the controverted portion of the book and frankly acknowledging the error of his first interpretation. He admitted, too, the excellence of the riverside scenes in 'Our Mutual Friend,' though on the whole he was certainly severe on Dickens.

Esther Summerson was a pet aversion of his, and he scoffed most fervently at the Cheeryble brothers, as at other figures especially redolent of Dickensian sentiment.

Failing the hotel verandah, one could often chance upon Stevenson in the billiard-room, though not often with a cue in his hand. Once only do I remember seeing him play a game, and a truly remarkable performance it was. He played with all the fire and dramatic intensity that he was apt to put into things. The balls flew wildly about, on or off the table as the case might be; but seldom indeed even threatened a pocket or got within a hand's-breadth of a cannon. 'What a fine thing a game of billiards is,' he remarked to the astonished on-lookers,—'once a year or so!'

But the after-dinner hour when the menkind got together in that same room was the right one for Stevenson. A crowd would always kindle him; and one man in particular, whom I will call the Professor, had an especial knack of stirring his mettle.

The Professor was jovial, loud-voiced, and as vehement as Stevenson himself. The rallies between those two were full of life and entertainment. On a certain evening, I remember, the Professor, with one hand clutching his long straw-coloured beard, was holding forth in his violent knock-me-down fashion upon the subject of Englishwomen.

'I don't care a rap for them,' he ejaculated. 'They are a poor, tame-spirited lot, not worth conquering. Your milk-and-water Englishwoman falls in love with you before you've had time to say ten words to her,' and so on and so forth. 'Now German women,' he continued, after thus demolishing those of his own country, 'are very different——'

'What!' cried Stevenson, with a theatrical outfling of both hands. 'Do you talk of German women? I tell you, this neck is wet with the tears of German women!'

'Well, all I can say is,' the Professor grunted sulkily, 'I haven't found them like that myself.'

'Haven't you?' shouted Stevenson, whose opponent was far from being a beauty-man. 'Then, by Jupiter Ammon, it only shows how heavily handicapped you are in the race!' And with that he fell back into a corner, and clasping his lean body in both arms literally hugged himself; the Professor meanwhile glaring sullenly at him through a mist of unparliamentary monosyllables. . . .

On one occasion during those weeks at the Belvedere, Stevenson played a part in which, to my deep regret, I missed seeing him. He read, at an entertainment given in the hotel drawing-room for the amusement of the invalids, Tennyson's 'Lucknow.' His reading did not greatly impress, so far as I could gather, the bulk of his audience. 'Too theatrical,' 'rather stagey,' those were the criticisms offered to the inquirer by the average Philistine. Perhaps they were sound, perhaps he had the temperament of a reciter rather than that of a reader, and was a trifle too impassioned and histrionic for the sober-minded British matron; but—but one would have liked to judge for oneself.

'Robert Louis Stevenson, Illustrator.'

The winter number of the *Studio* for 1896 was especially interesting to Stevenson collectors, by reason of the previously unpublished paper from the pen of R. L. S. on Le Monastier, which had been intended for the introductory chapter to 'Travels with a Donkey.' It was printed in the *Studio* under the title of 'A Mountain Town in France,' and along with this was given a set of plates reproduced in the same size as the originals from lead-pencil drawings made by Stevenson in the neighbourhood of Le Monastier. Concerning these sketches and also the well-known series of woodcuts executed by R. L. S. for family amusement at Davos Platz, and printed on the toy press of his stepson, Lloyd Osbourne, Mr. Joseph Pennell contributed to the same issue of the *Studio* a note on 'Robert Louis

Stevenson, Illustrator.' From Mr. Pennell's entertaining paper the following selections are taken:

There have been in the past authors who wished to be illustrators. There was Thackeray, for example, and Victor Hugo and Rossetti; the first a very commonplace draughtsman, who imagined that he was very distinguished; the second a distinguished draughtsman who never bothered, save for his own pleasure, about this form of expression; and the third, both a great writer and a great illustrator. To-day, as must be well known, there are authors who are illustrators, and illustrators who are authors. Thackeray, like most authors who cannot draw but think they can, took himself seriously as an artist. But this is a crime of which Stevenson could not have been guilty. Thackeray, in the end, despite his own ambition, was well illustrated by Fred Walker. But, though we have now a magnificent edition of Stevenson—that is, magnificent so far as type and paper and binding go—he stills remains, curiously enough, his own most amusing illustrator. No modern author probably gives so fine an opportunity for striking illustration, and yet none, it seems to me, has been so neglected in this respect. Mr. Walter Crane designed frontispieces for 'In the Cevennes' and 'An Inland Voyage.' Mr. William Hole has produced many drawings and etchings for different Stevenson books. But far the most sympathetic illustrations to Stevenson, from my point of view, were made by Mr. Metcalf for 'The Wrecker,' while others were done by Mr. Hartrick for 'The Body-Snatcher,' and Mr. A. W. Henley for the articles on Fontainebleau. Stevenson's own preferences were for work of a very different sort, and this is all the more strange because, in his life at Barbizon and Paris, he had associated with many of the most distinguished artists of the century. Yet I think it would be hard to find that they had had any apparent influence upon him. I remember on one occasion he published letters in praise of certain illustrations that had appeared in one of his stories, but, with the best will in the world, I have to admit myself incapable of sharing his admiration. Indeed, one might imagine that Stevenson did not understand, or possibly care for, graphic art in the least, if it were not for the little books, from which several

of the illustrations in this article are taken, as well as the original drawings here reproduced from a sketch-book which he carried with him to the Cevennes. These prove most decidedly that he had a great interest and delight in a certain form of art, and that he got an enormous amount of fun and amusement out of it. Thank Heaven, for him it was not serious, nor pompous, nor ponderous; not self-conscious nor precious. It was like all his work, gay and bright, full of life and go, and honest. . . .

All of Stevenson's works are supposed to have been published in every possible form, from the penny print to the tall paper copy. But, though it may come somewhat as a surprise to collectors of Stevenson, there is a whole series of books which have been issued in but one edition, and even the British Museum has only two of them. . . .

This series of books, so far as I have been able to find out consists of the following: 'Not I and other Poems,' by Robert Louis Stevenson, announced by the author, with distinguished modesty, to be a 'volume of enchanting poetry.' There are no illustrations to this. 'Moral Emblems': the First Series, which, the author says, 'has only to be seen to be admired'; and the Second Collection, of which I own the poster reproduced [in the *Studio*]. The book was published in two forms as an '*edition de luxe*, tall paper, extra fine,' and to this edition I imagine my copy belongs; and in a 'popular edition for the million, small paper, cuts slightly worn, a great bargain.' Was there ever such an honest publisher? These were issued about 1881 from the press, not so well known as it will be, of S. L. Osbourne and Co., Davos Platz, Switzerland, and were to be obtained from the 'publishers and all respectable booksellers.' Later on a third volume appeared: 'The Graver and the Pen, or Scenes from Nature with appropriate Verses,' illustrated by the author of 'Not I,' 'Moral Emblems,' 'Treasure Island,' etc. The printing office had by this time been moved to Edinburgh and established at No. 17 Heriot Row, and the poster reproduced . . . announces the volume with no uncertain voice, while the title-page explains, 'it was only by the kindness of Mr. Crerar of Kingussie that we are able to issue this little book, having allowed us to print it with his own press when ours was broken.' But either the printer or the press had been so much

improved that the typographical results in this volume are not so astonishing or amusing. 'The Blue Scalper,' by Stevenson, is also advertised, but I have never seen a copy of it. There is another volume by Mr. Osbourne, 'The Black Canyon.' A copy of this, I think, is in the possession of Mr. Gosse, who, by the way, was good enough to give me the volumes which I own. There are also, belonging to Mr. C. Baxter, some prints, apparently for an unpublished work, 'The Pirate and the Apothecary,' three designs—'three scenes' they are called—and an historical composition, 'Lord Nelson and the Tar,' reproduced . . . without any superfluity of text. The books were all written by Stevenson and Lloyd Osbourne, illustrated mainly by Stevenson, and engraved, it is announced in one of them, by the whole family. There is a charming conclusiveness in Stevenson's printed descriptions of the making of the volumes which will prevent any wild discussion by future bibliographers. For example, he says in 'Not I':

'The printer and the bard
In pressless Davos pray
Their sixpenny reward.

The pamphlet here presented
Was planned and printed by
A printer unindented,
A bard whom all decry.

The author and the printer,
With various kinds of skill,
Concocted it in Winter
In Davos on the Hill.

They burned the nightly taper,
But now the work is ripe;
Observe the costly paper,
Remark the perfect type.'

The work was begun in February and finished in October 1881, and, with great appropriateness, is dedicated to R. and R. Clark by S. L. Osbourne, the printer. The volume ends with an apology for

The smallness of the page
And of the printer.

Touching the lead-pencil drawings first mentioned, Mr. Pennell writes:

These original sketches are taken from a little book which he carried with him in the memorable trip 'In the Cevennes with a Donkey.' It will not be forgotten that, on that tramp, when he reached the convent of our Lady of the Snows and asked for shelter, he described himself as 'a literary man who drew landscapes.' And he could draw landscapes. One has only to look at this sketch-book, or at some of the backgrounds in the little engravings, to see that he was a close and intelligent observer of Nature, and that he knew how to record the results of his observations with a pencil. And more than this, he must have known what was going on in illustration about him. To turn up the illustrated magazines and books of that date is to find that there was a fashion for putting mourning borders around every drawing; and this Stevenson not only adopted, but carried to excess. However, funny as are the drawings, irresistibly funny as are the verses, primitive as is the printing, and humorous as is the incessant use of the two solitary ornaments which the firm seem to have possessed, one cannot escape from the fact that Stevenson had a wonderful, though untrained, eye for form. Every line that he puts down, that he cuts, especially, is full of meaning and of character.

On the British Museum acquiring a copy of a rare pamphlet containing testimonials in favour of Stevenson as candidate for the Chair of History at Edinburgh University, the *Daily News* published the following article on this episode of his career:

As a Professorial Candidate.

Very few readers of the brilliant story-teller have, we venture to affirm, ever associated his name with any kind of official position, and least of all with such a position as that of a professorial chair in a university. He does, indeed, appear actually to have held one office in the course of his curiously chequered and romantic career, and only one. He was for a time secretary to Professor F. Jenkin, when he was one of the jurors at the Paris Exhibition. Whether there is anything significant in the fact we do

not know, but Professor Jenkin was not one of those who gave the young man a testimonial. There were fourteen of his friends who did, and Stevenson had their testimonials privately printed in the form of the 8vo pamphlet now reckoned among the carefully guarded treasures of the British Museum.

These testimonials are dated 1881. The candidate was born in 1850. He was therefore about thirty-one years of age, and though he had been writing on and off ever since his boyhood, he had acquired little popularity. As the testimonials show, there were many who knew his work and knew him, and who had a very high appreciation of his powers. They recognised the subtlety of his fancy and the quaintness of his imagination and the lucidity and brilliancy of his style. They foresaw that he was destined to be famous, some of them, but as yet his genius had attracted no very general attention, and he had never had an income from his writing of more than about £300 a year, and a great part of his time, probably a great deal less. His income, small as it was, was in the last degree precarious, and on the title-page of his pamphlet is a brief intimation that is more pathetic than it appears—

'As Mr. Stevenson is at present on the Continent and cannot possibly meet with the electors, he has considered it advisable to submit the accompanying testimonials for their perusal.'

The fact appears to have been that poor Stevenson's health, which was even more precarious than his income, had broken down once more, and he had to hurry off for dear life, leaving behind him this little budget of praise which it must, one would think, have been rather a trying ordeal for one of his sensitiveness to have to get together and print and despatch, though Stevenson must have been more than human if he was not a little exalted by some of the flattering things said of him.

The first of these 'Testimonials in favour of Robert Louis Stevenson, Advocate,' is from Mr. [now Sir] Leslie Stephen. 'I have been,' says the author of a 'History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century,' 'familiar with Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson's writings for several years. Some of them have appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine*, of which I am editor.' Very remarkable literary talent, is Mr. Stephen's testimony, and he adds—'I know of no writer of Mr. Stevenson's standing

of whose future career I entertain greater expectations.' All his friends seemed confident about one thing, and that is, that whatever else the candidate might or might not do, he would certainly make his history interesting. 'Although,' says witness number one, 'I have not had any opportunity of forming a judgment of Mr. Stevenson's more specific qualifications for a Chair of History, I know that he has paid special attention to the history of Scotland; and from all that I have seen of him, I should think him admirably qualified to command the attention and respect of students, and to convey knowledge in the most interesting form.'

On this point of fitness for the specific post, Mr. Meiklejohn, Professor of the Theory, Practice, and History of Education, of St. Andrews, writes confidently. 'I believe,' he says, 'that Mr. Stevenson would do the work of that chair with real success. He possesses in a quite rare degree the most needful qualifications for a historian—a keen and true insight into the life of man, and a strong sympathy with all shapes and forms of it. Then he is both widely and deeply read in literature, and I am quite sure that he, more than any man I know of in Scotland, would make the past of our Scottish history live again, and be quickeningly present in our present life.'

Another St. Andrews professor, Dr. Lewis Campbell, Professor of Greek, thought the candidate admirably qualified, and believed he would do good work and adorn the office—

'His knowledge of the history of some periods, especially of Scottish history, is intimate and minute, and this, combined with his remarkable powers of imagination and expression, would enable him to kindle enthusiasm amongst the students, and incite them to investigation. His amiable facility of style must communicate grace and power to any subject which he handles with seriousness.'

Mr. Edmund Gosse, in a letter addressed to Stevenson, says: —'I have always considered that the retrospect and allusions to history which you have introduced into your books were among the most powerful of their attractions'; and Mr. John Addington Symonds speaks of him as having the temperament of an artist who cannot acquiesce in work that falls below his own standard. Mr. Sidney Colvin, Slade Professor of Fine Art

at Cambridge, and now at the head of the Department of Prints and Drawings of the British Museum, says:—'By temperament and character you are made to influence and attract growing minds.' Though at that time known only as a brilliant essayist and a writer of tales and travels, Mr. Colvin nevertheless testifies to the 'solidity of your studies, and the luminousness of your insight in history; especially in the history of society and institutions.' Mr. Andrew Lang calls him the most ingenious and refined writer of his generation, and understands that he has for some years been occupied with the studies of the religious, social, and political history of Scotland and of the Highlands.

The Rev. Professor Babington, the Rev. Dr. Cameron, Professor Sellar, Dr. Whyte, Professor Baynes, Mr. P. G. Hamerton, and Vice-Chancellor Tulloch, all sing the candidate's praises in strains that might well have made a modest man pass on the testimonial and run away, even if nothing else had prompted his going. And it is noticeable that several of them speak of his 'talent for taking infinite pains,' his 'scrupulous industry,' 'incessant industry,' and so on—a thing that is not often associated with genius.

Mr. Edmund Gosse points out (*Century*, July 1895) in 'Critical Kit-Kats' that very little has been written about Stevenson's residence at Hyères in 1883. He writes:

Bright Days at 'La Solitude.'

I am inclined to dwell in some fulness on the year he spent at Hyères, because, curiously enough, it was not so much as mentioned by any of the writers of obituary notices at the time of Stevenson's death. It takes, nevertheless, a prominent place in his life's history, for his removal thither marked a sudden and brilliant, though only temporary, revival in his health and spirits. Some of his best work, too, was written at Hyères, and one might say that fame first found him in this warm corner of Southern France.

The house at Hyères was called 'La Solitude.' It stood in a paradise of roses and aloes, fig-marigolds and olives. It had delectable and even, so Louis declared, 'sub-celestial' views over a plain bounded by 'certain mountains as graceful as Apollo, as severe as Zeus'; and at first the hot mistral, which blew, and burned where it blew, seemed the only drawback. Not

a few of the best poems in the 'Underwoods' reflect the ecstasy of convalescence under the skies and perfumes of La Solitude. By the summer Louis could report 'good health of a radiant order.' It was while he was at Hyères that Stevenson first directly addressed an American audience, and I may record that, in September 1883, he told me to 'beg Gilder your prettiest for a gentleman in pecuniary sloughs.' Mr. Gilder was quite alive to the importance of securing such a contributor, although when the Amateur Emigrant had entered the office of the *Century Magazine* in 1879 he had been very civilly but coldly shown the door. (I must be allowed to tease my good friends in Union Square by recording that fact!) Mr. Gilder asked for fiction, but received instead 'The Silverado Squatters,' which duly appeared in the magazine.

It was also arranged that Stevenson should make an ascent of the Rhone for the *Century*, and Mr. Joseph Pennell was to accompany him to make sketches for the magazine. But Stevenson's health failed again: the sudden death of a very dear old friend was a painful shock to him, and the winter of that year was not propitious. Abruptly, however, in January 1884, another crisis came. He went to Nice, where he was thought to be dying. He saw no letters; all his business was kindly taken charge of by Mr. Henley; and again, for a long time, he passed beneath the penumbra of steady languor and infirmity. When it is known how constantly he suffered, how brief and flickering were the intervals of comparative health, it cannot but add to the impression of his radiant fortitude through all these trials, and of his persistent employment of all his lucid moments. It was pitiful, and yet at the same time very inspiriting, to see a creature so feeble and so ill-equipped for the struggle bear himself so smilingly and so manfully through all his afflictions. There can be no doubt, however, that this latest breakdown vitally affected his spirits. He was never, after this, quite the gay child of genius that he had previously been. Something of a graver cast became natural to his thoughts; he had seen Death in the cave. And now for the first time we traced a new note in his writings—the note of 'Pulvis et Umbra.'

VI

LAST YEARS IN ENGLAND

The remaining three years of Stevenson's life in England were passed at Bournemouth, first in lodgings, and from January 1885 *in a house presented by Thomas Stevenson as a gift to his daughter-in-law. The name of this house was altered to Skerryvore, in commemoration of Alan Stevenson's great achievement in lighthouse-building.*

Mr. William Archer contributed to the *Critic* (New York), November 5, 1887, a most intimate sketch of Stevenson's home-life. 'Robert Louis Stevenson at Skerryvore' was the title of the article, which occupied two and a half pages of the *Critic*, and was written on the lines of 'Celebrities at Home,' that popular feature of the *World*. The article is of peculiar interest, since it gives us a peep at the domestic life of the novelist during the last days of his life in England, for he had bidden farewell to all his old friends and the old country on August 22nd, or more than two months before Mr. Archer's article was published. Mr. Archer begins with an impression of Bournemouth as 'a colony of health hunters,' a home of 'British invalidism and British Philistinism.' Skerryvore is described as standing on the brink of Alum Chine, or gully, and as being 'an unpretending two-story house, its yellow brick peeping through rich growths of ivy, and its blue slate roof cooed over by the pigeons of which the poet has sung':

Home-Life at Bournemouth.

Though only a few paces from the public road, it is thoroughly secluded. Its front faces southward (away from the road), and overlooks a lawn and

> 'Linnet-haunted garden-ground,
> Where still the esculents abound.'

The 'demesne' extends over the edge, and almost to the bottom, of the Chine; and here amid laurel and rhododendron, broom and gorse, the garden merges into a network of paths and stairways, with tempting seats and unexpected arbours at every turn. This seductive little labyrinth is of Mrs. Stevenson's own designing. She makes the whole garden her special charge and delight, but this particular corner of it

> 'Is as a kingdom conquered, where to reign.

Mr. Archer mentions, that at the time of his visit several panels of a series in the entrance-hall had been painted by artist friends of R. L. S., and 'many spaces still await contributions.' The following picture of the dining-room is precise:

'We are in the 'blue room' known to readers of 'Underwoods,' where hangs the Venetian mirror presented to the poet by that 'Prince of Men, Henry James.' It is an ordinary English dining-room of post-morrisian yet not ultra-æsthetic decoration, the work of the previous tenant, the Sheraton furniture, however, being introduced by the present owner. Over the fireplace is an engraving of Turner's 'Bell Rock Lighthouse,' built by Mr. Stevenson's grandfather. Another wall is adorned by two of Piranesi's great Roman etchings, between which hangs the conventional portrait of Shelley (a gift from his son, Sir Percy Shelley, who lives near Bournemouth), with under it a small portrait of Mary Wollstonecraft. A small armoury of buccaneering weapons is grouped under the Venetian mirror, some of which were presented to Mr. Stevenson as having belonged to Pew and Long John Silver—for the blind pirate of 'Treasure Island,' and he of the wooden leg, are (more or less) historic personages. Photographs of Mr. Sidney Colvin and of the late Sir Henry

Taylor, author of 'Philip van Artevelde,' an etching by Mr. Will H. Low, the American artist; a water-colour from the New Forest, by Mr. A. W. Henley; and a few specimens of blue china, in which Mr. Stevenson greatly delights, complete the decoration of the room.

Of the occupants of the 'blue room' Mr. Archer gives us this graphic sketch:

He now sits at the foot of the table rolling a limp cigarette in his long, limp fingers, and talking eagerly all the while, with just enough trace of Scottish intonation to remind one that he is the author of 'Thrawn Janet' and the creator of Alan Breck Stewart. He has still the air and manner of a young man, for illness has neither tamed his mind nor aged his body. It has left its mark, however, in the pallor of his long oval face, with its wide-set eyes, straight nose, and thin-lipped sensitive mouth, scarcely shaded by a light moustache, the jest and scorn of his more ribald intimates. His long dark hair straggles with an irregular wave down to his neck, a wisp of it occasionally falling over his ear, and having to be replaced with a light gesture of the hand. He is dressed in a black velvet jacket, showing at the throat the loose rolling collar of a white flannel shirt; and if it is at all cold, he has probably thrown over his shoulders an ancient maroon-coloured shawl, draped something after the fashion of a Mexican poncho. When he stands up you see he is well above the middle height, and of a naturally lithe and agile figure. He still moves with freedom and grace, but the stoop of his shoulders tells a tale of suffering.

Opposite to him sits Mrs. Stevenson, the tutelary genius of Skerryvore, a woman of small physical stature, but surely of heroic mould. Her features are clear-cut and delicate, but marked by unmistakable strength of character; her hair of an unglossy black, and her complexion darker than one would expect in a woman of Dutch-American race. I have heard her speak of a Moorish strain in her ancestry, whether seriously or in jest I know not. Beneath a placid though always alert and vivacious exterior, Mrs. Stevenson conceals much personal suffering and continual anxieties under which many a stronger woman

might well break down. Her personality, no less than her husband's, impresses itself potently on all who have the good fortune to be welcomed at Skerryvore.

A further 'interior' of this Bournemouth home shows us the drawing-room, which 'is stamped much more thoroughly than the dining-room with the Stevensonian individuality':

It is not encumbered with superfluous furniture, tables heaped with 'drawing-room books,' or what-nots burdened with Japaneseries. Half-way along one side of the room runs a low divan formed of a series of oak boxes covered with yellow silk cushions. Lounging chairs, mainly of light wicker-work, are scattered about, and a large oaken cabinet stands beside the door. It is surmounted by a beautiful group in plaster executed as an illustration to one of Victor Hugo's poems by the French sculptor Rodin, for whom Mr. Stevenson has the warmest admiration, having publicly defended him from the charge (if charge it can be called) of being 'the Zola of sculpture.' This group is flanked by a couple of grinning Burmese gods; and, perhaps to counteract the influence of these uncanny deities, a Catholic devotional image of ancient date stands in an opposite corner. Over the cabinet, again, hangs a beautiful 'Landscape with Horses,' by Mr. Arthur Lemon, with a photograph of the late Professor Fleeming Jenkin to the right of it and one of Mr. W. E. Henley to the left, both being, like the photograph of Mr. Colvin in the dining-room, the work of a private friend. From another wall, Mr. John E. Sargent's half-grotesque yet speaking portrait of Mr. Stevenson himself looks out at us livingly.

Mr. Archer gives us a hint of the conversation which took place during this visit. The talk seems to have begun with cats, and thence to Fleeming Jenkin and amateur acting, and so to the drama at large:

Soon the conversation flits across the Channel, and Mr. Stevenson redoubles his vivacity as he enlarges on the delightful humour of Labiche, or denounces the didactics of Dumas *fils*,

for whose literary talent, however, as shown in such a play as 'Monsieur Alphonse,' he entertains a great admiration. 'I remember,' he says, 'coming out of the Français after seeing "Le Demi-Monde." I was in a white heat of indignation—mind, at this distance of time, I admit there's a problem in the piece, but I saw none then, except a problem in brutality—and in my haste I trod on an old gentleman's toes. With that suavity of manner that so well becomes me, I turned to apologise, but at once repented me of that intention, and said (in French), "No, you are one of the *lâches* who have been applauding that play—I retract my apology." The old Frenchman laid his hand on my arm and said, with a smile that was truly heavenly in its temperance, irony, and good nature, "*Ah, monsieur, vous êtes bien jeune!*"'

But if the younger Dumas comes in for little of Mr. Stevenson's homage, the elder is the god of his idolatry. He will pace up and down the room, as in Mr. Sargent's portrait, consuming countless cigarettes, and proclaiming rapturously his delight in 'Olympe de Clèves,' 'La Dame de Montsoreau,' 'Vingt Ans Après,' and 'Le Vicomte de Bragelonne'—especially the last. Turning next to a writer who seems to be almost at the opposite pole, he will go over one by one the novels of George Meredith, bringing into relief the characteristic beauties of each. 'The Egoist' he numbers among the books which have most powerfully influenced him, and owns to having read it seven or eight times. 'Meredith read me some chapters,' he says, 'before it was published, and at last I could stand it no longer. I interrupted him, and said, "Now, Meredith, own up—you have drawn Sir Willoughby Patterne from *me*!" Meredith laughed, and said, "No, no, my dear fellow, I've taken him from all of us, but principally from myself."'

Mr. Archer's sketch is concluded with mention of a subsequent visit to Skerryvore shortly before his (Stevenson's) departure for America:

I found him one morning stretched on the study couch in dressing-gown and slippers, engaged in that terrible task, an overhauling of old papers. The floor was littered ankle-deep

with torn letters, manuscripts, and proofs. I picked up a shred of printed matter, and obtained a delightful foretaste of 'Underwoods,' then in the press. Most of our talk has faded from my memory. I remember how Stevenson startled me by expressing the opinion that Mrs. Oliphant's genius, well husbanded, might have gone further than George Eliot's—that the too industrious Scotch novelist possesses far more 'geniality' than her English sister. I remember, too, with what gusto he took down a volume of Wellington's Peninsular despatches (Wellington is one of his heroes) to give me instances of the grim humour in which the much-tried captain would now and then exhale his bitterness of spirit.

It was a pleasant hour, and grateful to the memory; yet only one out of many thousand pleasant hours for which the friends who have seen him face to face, and the friends who love him unseen, are beholden to this bright, unquenchable, indomitable spirit.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor wrote in *T. P.'s Weekly*, 14th November 1902:

Mr. C. H. E. Brookfield, in his interesting collection of stories, adds one to the many versions of the origin of 'Jekyll and Hyde.' Here is his version:

Origin of 'Jekyll and Hyde.'

'I was in his company at the moment that he conceived the germ of the idea of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." He was inveighing against a man with whom he had done business and with whose methods he was dissatisfied. The man's name was Samuel Creggan, or something like it. "He's a man who trades on the Samuel," Stevenson declared, in his rather finikin, musical Scots voice. "He receives you with Samuel's smile on his face; with the gesture of Samuel he invites you into a chair; with Samuel's eyes cast down in self-depreciation he tells you how well satisfied his clients have always been with his dealings; but every now and again you catch a glimpse of the Creggan peeping out like a white ferret. Creggan's the *real* man: Samuel's only superficial."'

I don't know whether Mr. Brookfield uses the name of

Creggan as a veil for the identity of the man who really suggested his 'mot' to Stevenson; as a matter of fact, it was said about the late Kegan Paul. The story has recently been told by Mr. Wilfrid Meynell in a notice he wrote of the dead publisher. Kegan Paul had been Stevenson's first publisher; indeed, had been among the very first to recognise the genius of the then unknown writer. But the books had not paid particularly, and Stevenson was dissatisfied, probably without reason; no author ever is satisfied with a publisher. Stevenson, when he had his next book ready, went with a letter of introduction from Walter Besant to another firm—Chatto and Windus. 'The early dissolution of the partnership,' writes Mr. Meynell, 'between the two as publisher and author was a little pang which had its instant expression.' 'Oh, yes,' said R. L. S., 'Kegan is an excellent fellow, but Paul is a publisher.' 'I have always,' adds Mr. Meynell, 'looked upon that distinction between the dual personality of the man and the publisher as the germ of Jekyll and Hyde.' [1]

Mr. Edmund Gosse writes of his last meeting with R. L. S. as follows in 'Critical Kit-Kats':

Farewell to England.

The last time I had the happiness of seeing Stevenson was on Sunday, August 21, 1887. He had been brought up from Bournemouth the day before in a wretched condition of health, and was lodged in a private hotel in Finsbury Circus, in the City, ready to be easily moved to a steamer in the Thames on the morrow. I was warned, in a note, of his passage through town, and of the uncertainty whether he could be seen. On the chance, I went over early on the 21st, and, very happily for me, he had had a fair night, and could see me for an hour or two. No one else but Mrs. Stevenson was with him. His position was one which might have daunted any man's spirit, doomed to exile, in miserable health, starting vaguely across the Atlantic, with all his domestic interests rooted up, and with no notion where, or if at all, they should be replanted. If ever a man of imagination could be excused for repining, it was now.

[1] See Stevenson's own account, page 85.

But Louis showed no white feather. He was radiantly humorous and romantic. It was church time, and there was some talk of my witnessing his will, which I could not do, because there could be found no other reputable witness, the whole crew of the hotel being at church. This set Louis off on a splendid dream of romance. 'This,' he said, 'is the way in which our valuable city hotels—packed, doubtless, with rich objects of jewellery—are deserted on a Sunday morning. Some bold piratical fellow, defying the spirit of Sabbatarianism, might make a handsome revenue by sacking the derelict hotels between the hours of ten and twelve. One hotel a week would suffice to enable such a man to retire into private life within the space of a year. A mask might, perhaps, be worn for the mere fancy of the thing, and to terrify kitchen-maids, but no real disguise would be needful to an enterprise that would require nothing but a brave heart and a careful study of the City Postal Directory.' He spoke of the matter with so much fire and gallantry that I blushed for the youth of England and its lack of manly enterprise. No one ever could describe preposterous conduct with such a convincing air as Louis could. Common sense was positively humbled in his presence.

The only book Stevenson was anxious to take with him on the voyage was 'The Woodlanders,' by Mr. Thomas Hardy, 'which we had to scour London that Sunday afternoon to get hold of.'

VII

IN AMERICA

Stevenson's father having died on May 8, 1887, *Mrs. Thomas Stevenson was now free to accompany her son and his wife and stepson to America in his quest of health. They arrived at New York on September 7th. By the 3rd of October they were settled in winter quarters at a resort for consumptives near the shores of Saranac Lake, where they remained until the middle of April* 1888, *Stevenson busy all the time with literary work and projects. For the summer a yachting cruise was planned, and Mrs. R. L. Stevenson having gone to San Francisco, found a yacht that would suit for a trip to the South Seas. Stevenson's health was not improving; the trip was to be a last resource. The yacht Casco was chartered and fitted for the cruise. It was decided to make for the Marquesas Islands. On 28th June she was 'towed outside the Golden Gate, and headed for the south across the long swell of the Pacific. So with his household he sailed away beyond the sunset, and America, like Europe, was to see him no more.'* [1]

When Stevenson went to America in the autumn of 1887 in search of a congenial clime, his reputation, thanks mainly to 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,' was already established across the Atlantic, and on debarking from the steamship *Ludgate Hill* at New York, he 'was met by a crowd of reporters, and—what was more to his taste—by his old friend Mr. Will H. Low,' says Mr. Graham

[1] The 'Life' of R. L. S., by Graham Balfour.

Balfour. Stevenson seems to have been very tractable in the hands of the interviewers. The following notes of his arrival are taken from the *Critic* of 10th September 1887:

Arrival at New York.

Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson arrived in New York on Wednesday last, intending, as we were told at the time of going to press, to proceed at once to Newport. He was accompanied by his wife. Mr. E. L. Burlingame, editor of *Scribner's Magazine*, who met him on his arrival here, was pleased to find the novelist and poet looking much better than recent reports of his severe illness had led one to expect.

A *Herald* reporter caught Mr. Stevenson at a favourable moment and subjected him to an interview, from which we glean much that is interesting.

In answer to the reporter's inquiry, 'What is your object in now visiting America?' Mr. Stevenson said: 'Simply on account of my health, which is wretched. I am suffering from catarrhal consumption, but am sanguine that my sojourn here will do much to restore me to my former self. I came round by the *Ludgate Hill* principally because I like the sea, and because I thought the long voyage would do me good. But I certainly did not expect to make the voyage with one hundred horses. These were taken on board at Havre. The company's agent at Havre was most impertinent to us, but the horses behaved themselves exceedingly well. And I feel pleased to add that the ship's officers were particularly nice, and everything was most pleasant after we got used to the stables.'

'Where do you propose to go?'

'Well, the Lord only knows; I don't. I intend to get out of New York just as fast as I can. I like New York exceedingly. It is to me a mixture of Chelsea, Liverpool, and Paris, but I want to get away into the country.'

'There is a great difference of opinion as to what suggested your works, particularly "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" and "Deacon Brodie"?'

'Well, this has never been properly told. On one occasion I was very hard up for money, and I felt that I had to do something. I thought and thought, and tried hard to find a subject

to write about. At night I dreamed the story, not precisely as it is written, for of course there are always stupidities in dreams, but practically it came to me as a gift, and what makes it appear more odd is that I am quite in the habit of dreaming stories. Thus, not long ago, I dreamed the story of "Olalla," which appeared in my volume "The Merry Men," and I have at the present moment two unwritten stories which I likewise dreamed. The fact is that I am so much in the habit of making stories that I go on making them while I sleep quite as hard, apparently, as when I am awake. They sometimes come to me in the form of nightmares, in so far that they make me cry out aloud. But I am never deceived by them. Even when fast asleep I know that it is I who am inventing, and when I cry out it is with gratification to know that the story is so good. So soon as I awake, and it always awakens me when I get on a good thing, I set to work and put it together.

'For instance, all I dreamed about Dr. Jekyll was that one man was being pressed into a cabinet, when he swallowed a drug and changed into another being. I awoke and said at once that I had found the missing link for which I had been looking so long, and before I again went to sleep almost every detail of the story, as it stands, was clear to me. Of course, writing it was another thing.

'"Deacon Brodie!" I certainly didn't dream that, but in the room in which I slept when a child in Edinburgh there was a cabinet—and a very pretty piece of work it was, too—from the hands of the original Deacon Brodie. When I was about nineteen years of age I wrote a sort of hugger-mugger melodrama, which lay by in my coffer until it was fished out by my friend W. E. Henley. He thought he saw something in it, and we started to work together, and after a desperate campaign we turned out the original drama of "Deacon Brodie," as performed in London, and recently, I believe, successfully in this city. We were both young men when we did that, and I think we had an idea that bad-heartedness was strength. Now the piece has been all overhauled, and although I have no idea whether it will please an audience, I don't think either Mr. Henley or I are ashamed of it. We take it now for a good, honest melodrama not so very ill done.'

This from the New York *Critic*, 17th September 1887, is curious:

Mr. Stevenson sailed for the United States with the intention of remaining here for some time—a long time, possibly. The voyage seemed to do him so much good, however, that on the way over he resolved to linger in America but a short while, and then take ship for Japan. Almost the first letter he received after landing—a letter written after he left England, but before he decided upon this change of plan—contained a reference to his proposed trip to Japan! I refer this circumstance, with all respect, to the Society for Psychical Research.

Projected Visit to Japan.

Speaking of Mr. Stevenson, I am told that the cash receipts on the opening night of 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' were almost unprecedented in the history of first nights at the Madison Square. Yet the impression still prevails that literature and stage-literature have nothing in common.

'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,' adapted to the stage by Mr. T. R. Sullivan, with Mr. Richard Mansfield in the dual *rôle*, was produced in New York, 10th September 1887.

Under the heading, 'A Writer about whom Critics Agree,' the New York *Critic* of March 12, 1887, quoted this passage from an article by Mr. R. H. Stoddard in the New York *Mail and Express*. It is printed here as illustrating the pitch of his literary popularity at the time of his arriving in America:

If there is any writer of the time about whom the critics of England and America substantially agree, it is Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson. There is something in his work, precisely what, it is not easy to say, which engages and fixes the attention from the first page to the last, which shapes itself before the mind's eye while reading, and which refuses to be forgotten long after the book which revealed it has been closed and put away. There are two stories in the volume containing his 'New Arabian

Literary Reputation in America.

Nights,' both night adventures, the more powerful one an adventure of that scoundrel and man of genius, the poet Villon, which seared themselves into our recollection years ago, and which are as vivid there now as some of the terrible things in Shakespeare. The quality by which Mr. Stevenson is chiefly distinguished, and which differentiates his writing from the story-writing of the period, is imagination—the power of creating characters which are as real as creatures of flesh and blood, and of devising and shaping events which are as inevitable as fate. Beyond all the writers of his time, he is remarkable for clearness and accuracy of vision; he seems to see, and we believe he *does* see, all that he describes, and he makes all his readers see likewise. How he accomplishes this last feat, which is a very uncommon one, we have never been able to discover, for on returning to a scene or a chapter which has impressed us deeply, which has sent the blood tingling through our veins, or has darkened our souls with foreboding, we have always failed to detect the secret of his power. It can hardly be in his language, which is always of the simplest, nor in the feeling that he depicts, which is always natural, and often common; but it is there all the same.

From the New York *Critic*, December 17, 1887:

A Portrait at Saranac Lake.

A correspondent of the *Sun* has peeped in upon Mr. R. L. Stevenson in his Adirondack retreat. He writes: Mr. Stevenson occupies a neat cottage on the Saranac River, at a point where the settlement begins to thin out into the forest primeval. His wife, mother, and stepson, Mr. Lloyd Osbourne, are living with him. I was glad to find him looking very much the better of his stay in the Adirondacks, which he means to prolong until spring. He is able to take a walk of about half a mile a day, and exceedingly enjoys his short tramps over the snow in Canadian moccasins. To those curious to know what the creator of Dr. Jekyll, Alan Breck, and John Silver looks like, let me say that he is about five feet ten in height, fair and spare; he wears his light-brown hair long and loose; his broad, high forehead is illuminated by a piercing pair of eyes at a remarkable distance apart. He has the air of an artist who has been ill, and is now well advanced toward recovery. In conversation he is most animated and

cheery, speaking with a crisp Edinburgh accent. As we talked about one thing and another, it came out that he is a strong anti-Gladstonian. Surely it is natural that the author of 'Kidnapped' should be a sound Scott-like Tory. Mr. Stevenson spoke of American authors. He likes Stockton's stories very much, and among Mark Twain's volumes prefers 'Huckleberry Finn.' Mr. Stevenson is busy on a third article in the series he is writing for *Scribner's*, and never lets a day go by without some substantial work. I asked him which of his own books he liked best. 'Kidnapped,' he promptly replied. It is probable that he may write a sequel to it. It is his practice to drop a story in the middle and take it up a month or so afterwards, with interest revived. 'Treasure Island,' his quickest piece of work, was written in that way. Mr. Stevenson excels in telling pawky Scottish stories, a faculty evidently derived from his mother.

Mrs. M. G. Van Rensselaer had only 'a scanty hour' of Stevenson in the flesh, visiting him during his illness in New York; but the impression of the meeting, as set forth in her article in the *Century Magazine* of November 1888, is graphic and enduring. Mrs. Van Rensselaer writes:

He was ill when I saw him in New York in the spring of 1888, after he had come down from the Adirondacks. He was in bed, as he often used to be for days together—so often that the beautiful portrait which, in the previous autumn, St. Gaudens had made of him, backed by his pillows and covered by his blankets, must, I fancy, seem to many American friends the Stevenson whom they knew best. He was in a dismal hotel, in the most dismal possible chamber. Even a very buoyant soul might have been pardoned if, then and there, it had declined upon inactivity and gloom. But these were not the constituents of the atmosphere I found.

There were a great many things on Stevenson's bed—things to eat and to smoke, things to write with and to read. I have seen tidier sickbeds, and also invalids more modishly attired:

this one wore over his shoulders an old red cloak with a hole for the head in the middle (a *serape*, I supposed), which, faded and spotted with ink, looked much like a schoolroom tablecloth. But the untidiness seemed a proof of his desire to make the most of each passing minute; clearly, the littering things had been brought, not in case they might be wanted, but as answers to actual and eager needs. Ill as he was, Stevenson had been reading and writing—and smoking, as St. Gaudens shows; and in fact, I call him an invalid chiefly because, as I remember him, the term has such a picturesque unfitness. His body was in evil case, but his spirit was more bright, more eager, more ardently and healthily alive than that of any other mortal.

I find myself repeating the one word 'eager.' There is none which better befits Stevenson's appearance and manner and talk. His mind seemed to quiver with perpetual hope of something that would give it a new idea to feed upon, a new fact to file away, a new experience to be tested and savoured. I could read this attitude even in the quick cordiality of his greeting. The welcome was not for me, as myself, but for the new person—for the new human being who, possessing ears and a tongue, might possibly contribute some item to the harvest of the day. . . .

I should like to relate how he pounced upon every Americanism I chanced to utter, not deriding it, but shaking it in the teeth of a pleased curiosity as a bit of treasure-trove, a new fragment of speech with an origin, a history, a utility that must be learned; and in other ways to explain what a zest he had for those myriad little interests, little occupations, discoveries, and acquisitions, which make existence a perpetual joy to a fresh and questing mind, but which most adult minds have grown too stiff and dull to value. And of course I should like to record how he spoke about his own writings, and, with even quicker pleasure, talked about those of others. But to mummify beautiful, vivid speech is to do it deep injustice, and so I will not try to reproduce his words; and if I should try to paraphrase them, I should merely blur their meaning to myself and make it clear to no one else.

Miss Jeanette L. Gilder, the well-known American critic, has given this memory of R. L. S. It is taken

from her essay, 'Stevenson—and After,' which appeared in the American *Review of Reviews*, February 1895:

An Impression by Jeanette L. Gilder.

I never saw Robert Louis Stevenson but once, but I shall not soon forget the impression made upon me by the singular charm of the man. It was on the occasion of his second, or it may have been his third, visit to the United States, and he was staying at the Victoria Hotel with his wife and stepson, Lloyd Osbourne. I was a perfect stranger to him, and I wonder now how I ever had the temerity to beard this lion in his den. My only excuse was that we had had some correspondence, and that we also had some friends in common. Two of these friends came in soon after I had shaken hands with the romancer. They were Mr. and Mrs. Will H. Low, the well-known painter and his wife. The Lows and the Stevensons were old and dear friends, and they had not seen each other in a long time. It was a delightful meeting. Such handshaking and such embracing you would not expect to see outside of France. The men threw their arms around each other's necks with all the effusion of schoolgirls, but with infinitely more depth to their emotions. It was a great time, and rejoicing was general. I did not stay very long, for though they gave me no reason to suspect that they would not like to have me spend the day, I sympathised with their reunion too sincerely to intrude myself upon the scene any longer than ordinary civility permitted.

Mr. Stevenson was arrayed then as you see him in most of his pictures, in velvet sack-coat, turned-down collar and loose tie. He was smoking the inevitable cigarette, as was his stepson also. His dress suited his face, which was not that of an ordinary man. I have seldom seen eyes further apart or more striking, as they were coal-black, or, at least, had that appearance in contrast with his pale complexion. He was as lively and full of spirits as though he had never known what it was to have an ill day. His conversation—which was entirely unbookish, as befitted the occasion—bubbled over with fun, and altogether he suggested anything rather than an invalid in the vain search for health.

Ever since that lucky day when I accidentally came across a copy of 'Travels with a Donkey,' I have been an enthusiastic

admirer of Mr. Stevenson's genius—it is certainly more than talent—but it is his smaller books that I care for most: 'Travels with a Donkey,' 'An Inland Voyage,' 'The New Arabian Nights,' and his essays. 'The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,' of course, interested me immensely, but it is hardly a book to enjoy. I bought a copy in Liverpool at the time of its first publication, just as I was taking the steamer for New York, and read it on the trip over. I had read 'An Inland Voyage' on the trip out, and so far as enjoyment goes I confess that the latter book gave me the most of it, though I am quite ready to acknowledge all the qualities that gave the former story its great success.

VIII

ISLAND DAYS

TO TUSITALA IN VAILIMA[1]

I

Clearest voice in Britain's chorus,
Tusitala!
Years ago, years four-and-twenty,
Grey the cloudland drifted o'er us,
When these ears first heard you talking,
When these eyes first saw you smiling.
Years of famine, years of plenty,
Years of beckoning and beguiling,
Years of yielding, shifting, baulking,—
When the good ship 'Clansman' bore us
Round the spits of Tobermory,
Glens of Voulin like a vision,
Crags of Knoidart, huge and hoary,—
We had laughed in light derision,
Had they told us, told the daring
Tusitala,
What the years' pale hands were bearing,—
Years in stately dim division.

II

Now the skies are pure above you,
Tusitala;
Feather'd trees bow down to love you;

[1] This poem, addressed to Robert Louis Stevenson, reached him at Vailima three days before his death. It was the last piece of verse read by Stevenson, and it is the subject of the last letter he wrote on the last day of his life. The poem was read by Mr. Lloyd Osbourne at the funeral.—It is here printed, by kind permission of the author, from Mr. Edmund Gosse's 'In Russet and Silver,' 1894, of which it was the dedication.

Perfum'd winds from shining waters
Stir the sanguine-leav'd hibiscus
That your kingdom's dusk-ey'd daughters
Weave about their shining tresses;
Dew-fed guavas drop their viscous
Honey at the sun's caresses,
Where eternal summer blesses
Your ethereal musky highlands;—
Ah! but does your heart remember,
Tusitala,
Westward in our Scotch September,
Blue against the pale sun's ember,—
That low rim of faint long islands,
Barren, granite-snouted nesses,
Plunging in the dull'd Atlantic,
Where beyond Tiree one guesses
At the full tide, loud and frantic?

III

By strange pathways God hath brought you,
Tusitala,
In strange webs of fortune caught you,
Led you by strange moods and measures
To this paradise of pleasures!
And the body-guard that sought you
To conduct you home to glory,—
Dark the oriflammes they carried,
In the mist their cohort tarried,—
They were Languor, Pain, and Sorrow,
Tusitala!
Scarcely we endured their story
Trailing on from morn to morrow,
Such the devious roads they led you,
Such the error, such the vastness,
Such the cloud that overspread you,
Under exile bow'd and banish'd,
Lost, like Moses in the fastness,
Till we almost deem'd you vanished.

IV

Vanish'd? Ay, that's still the trouble,
Tusitala
Though your tropic isle rejoices,
'Tis to us an Isle of Voices
Hollow like the elfin double
Cry of disembodied echoes,
Or an owlet's wicked laughter,
Or the cold and hornèd gecko's
Croaking from a ruined rafter,—
Voices these of things existing,
Yet incessantly resisting
Eyes and hands that follow after;
You are circled, as by magic,
In a surf-built palmy bubble,
Tusitala;
Fate hath chosen, but the choice is
Half delectable, half tragic,
For we hear you speak, like Moses,
And we greet you back, enchanted,
But reply's no sooner granted,
Than the rifted cloudland closes.

September 1894. EDMUND GOSSE.

'For three years . . . Stevenson wandered up and down the face of the Pacific, spending most of his time in the Hawaiian Islands and the Gilberts, in Tahiti, and in Samoa, his future home. During this period he visited, however cursorily, almost every group of importance in the Eastern and Central Pacific.'[1] *Early in* 1890 *he purchased some three hundred acres of land two miles from the town of Apia, in Samoa, with the idea of building a house and settling there; but it was not until early in the succeeding year that his house, Vailima, had been completed and he*

[1] Mr. Graham Balfour in the 'Life.'

was at rest from his voyaging. In May his family circle was increased by the arrival of his mother and Mrs. Isobel Strong, his step-daughter, with her son. In December of 1892 *his mountain dwelling was considerably increased in size. He was called Tusitala by his native retainers, the name being Samoan for the 'Teller of Tales.' On December* 3, 1894, *he died suddenly, having been engaged that forenoon on his half-finished book, 'Weir of Hermiston.'*

Very little has been published about Stevenson's visits to the Hawaiian Islands, beyond what he himself wrote of these episodes in his wander-years, so that the following pages quoted from the *Scots Pictorial*, July 3, 1897, possess considerable value as a link in the chain of Stevenson's history. The writer is Mr. W. F. Wilson of Honolulu:

Stevenson in Hawaii.

A few stray jottings regarding Robert Louis Stevenson's connection with the Hawaiian Islands will, it is to be hoped, prove acceptable to the many admirers of that gifted and genial author. It is true that most of the time spent by 'Tusitala' in the isles of the great Pacific was passed at his mountain retreat at Vailima, Samoa, yet on two different occasions he stayed a considerable period at the Hawaiian Islands. The first time was in 1889. He arrived at Honolulu on 24th January on the yacht *Casco* from Tahiti, accompanied by his wife, mother, and a party of friends. He stayed for a time at the Hawaiian hotel, but later on took up his quarters at a cottage at Waikiki, a seaside resort distant about three miles from Honolulu. Here he led a life of *dolce far niente*. He had not long escaped from the 'glorious climate of California,' as it is exemplified in foggy, windy San Francisco, and doubtless he enjoyed the change to the warm, sunny island shores of *Hawaii nei*.

He lived six months in Honolulu while on this visit, but the fact of his having come south to recuperate, and the indifferent state of his health while here, probably explains why he has not written more about Hawaii in his stories, or has not employed

the old Hawaiian myths and folk-lore as the foundation of some of his sketches. For not only is there a wealth of old 'meles' or chants and legends from which to pick and choose, but the beauty of the country itself is such as would naturally inspire the pen of a poet and lover of nature like Stevenson. His health, however, was so bad that he did not even get the length of the Kilauea volcano. He once started to visit it, but got off the steamer half-way, at Hookena, a native village in the district of South Kona, Island of Hawaii, and there he remained until the rest of his party returned. Hookena lies seven miles south from Kealakekua Bay, the scene of Captain Cook's death; and about half-way between the two places is Honaunau, where still stand the remains of the black lava walls of the 'Puuhonua' or Hawaiian City of Refuge. This was a sort of walled enclosure used in times of war as a place of safety for the women and children, and for any warriors defeated in battle. Once within the walls of the enclosure, the fugitives were 'kapu' or sacred, and could not be touched.

It was whilst waiting for the return of his party of friends from their visit to Kilauea volcano that Stevenson must have composed his tale of the 'Bottle Imp.' The sole occupation of the Hawaiians living on the beach at Hookena is fishing in their slender outrigger canoes, and occasionally surf-swimming in the bay. The late D. H. Nahinu's house at Hookena, where Stevenson lived during his sojourn, is close to the beach, immediately in front of the spot where the semi-naked fishermen are wont to launch their long narrow canoes; and it was very likely when seated on the verandah in the cool of the evening and watching the different crews paddling to land with their loads of 'opelu' or 'akule,' that the idea of the 'Bottle Imp' came into his head.

Apart from the occupation of watching the young men and children amusing themselves by swimming in the breakers on the top of their surf boards, there is little to interest the visitor to Hookena. Certainly the view just before sunset looking towards the palm-trees of Kalahiki and the slopes of the huge snow-capped Maunaloa, where the coffee and awa grow, is enchanting; but unless one can live on fish and poi, or rice and eggs (it is difficult to get anything else to eat there), one soon tires

of Hookena and is glad to get a change to fresh fields and pastures new.

During his stay in Honolulu, Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson attended a grand 'luau' or feast given in the old Hawaiian style. King Kalakaua was present, and Mrs. Stevenson presented the King with a rare pearl from the Paumotus, the presentation being accompanied with the following lines by Mr. Stevenson, which he read himself:—

> The silver ship, my King—that was her name
> In the bright islands whence your fathers came—
> The silver ship at rest from wind and tides
> Below your palace, in your harbour rides;
> And the sea fairies, sitting safe on shore,
> Like eager merchants, count their treasures o'er,
> One gift they find, one strange and lovely thing,
> Now doubly precious, since it pleased a King.
> The right, my liege, is ancient as the lyre,
> For bards to give to Kings what Kings admire;
> 'Tis mine to offer for Apollo's sake,
> And since the gift is fitting, yours to take,
> To golden hands the golden pearl I bring,—
> The ocean jewel to the Island King.

The Stevenson party left Honolulu for a cruise among the South Sea Islands on the schooner *Equator* in June 1889. They visited several of the groups south of the line, and from time to time R. L. S. related his experiences in a series of letters published in *Black and White* and the *New York Sun*, and afterwards reprinted in book-form under the title of 'In the South Seas.' As we all know, Stevenson finally pitched his tent at Samoa, and how he spent his days there is well told in the Vailima letters.

In September 1893 'Tusitala' paid his second and last visit to Honolulu. Needing a change, he fled from the feverish political atmosphere of Apia and came to dwell in our midst once more. He was accompanied by a Samoan youth who acted as his henchman. No sooner had they landed than the boy caught the measles, and both master and servant were quarantined at Sans Souci Hotel, Waikiki, until the recovery of the boy. Stevenson, as on his former visit, preferred the quiet sandy beach of Waikiki to the stir and cackle of Honolulu.

This is how he speaks of Sans Souci, the hostelry in question—'If any one desires such old-fashioned things as lovely scenery, quiet, pure air, clear sea water, good food, and heavenly sunsets hung out before his eyes every evening over the Pacific and the distant hills of Waianae, I recommend him cordially to the Sans Souci.'

There are a number of Scotsmen in the Hawaiian Islands, many of them being managers of sugar plantations, engineers, mechanics, or engaged in mercantile pursuits. The Scottish Thistle Club, a social organisation having its headquarters in Honolulu, sent a deputation of its members to ask Stevenson if he would favour the Club with a short talk or lecture on any subject. The Committee found the object of their search seated on the broad 'lanai' or verandah in front of the hotel, which is situated close to the blue waters of the bay, and from which is to be had an extensive view of cocoa-nut groves and the distant Waianae range of mountains. Stevenson was dressed as usual in his brown velveteen jacket and *négligé* shirt, and during the interview kept continually rolling and smoking cigarettes. The committee spent a delightful couple of hours or so in his company, the talk ranging over a variety of topics, from Polynesian mythology to Scottish genealogy and history. He cordially consented to give the lecture, and it took place in the hall of the Club, which had been suitably decorated for the occasion with tartan plaids, wreaths of flowers and heather, and pictures of scenes in Bonnie Scotland.

Addressing his audience as 'Brither Scots,' Stevenson gave a brilliant and humorous talk on Scottish history, which he described as 'one long brawl.' His talk was quite impromptu, and was interspersed with humorous Scottish anecdotes. He wound up by saying, 'I received a book the other day called "The Stickit Minister," with a dedication to myself, which affected me strangely, so that I cannot read it without a gulp. It was addressed to me in the third person, and bade me remember those places "where, about the graves of the Martyrs, the whaups are crying—his heart remembers how." Now when I think on my latter end, as I do sometimes—especially of late years when it seems less imminent—I feel that when I shall come to die out here among these beautiful

islands, I shall have lost something that had been my due, my predestinate but forfeited grave among honest Scots sods; and I feel that I shall never quite attain to what Patrick Walker calls, in one of those pathetic touches of which I have already spoken, my "resting grave," unless it were to be in one of our purple hillsides, under one of our old, quaint, and half obliterated table-tombstones slanting down the brae, and "where, about the graves of the Martyrs, the whaups are crying, my heart remembers how."'

On the following week Stevenson kindly offered to give another lecture to be open to the general public, and at which a small admission fee was to have been charged for the benefit of the reading-room and library connected with the Scottish Thistle Club. A large hall was engaged and the tickets all sold, but at the last moment he was taken ill and his doctor forbade him the platform. As Stevenson himself said, with a twinkle in his eye, 'It would never do to kill myself in giving a two-bob lecture.'

Before he left Honolulu, he was elected to be one of the Honorary Chieftains of the Thistle Club, and in a letter written to the Club Secretary on 18th October 1893, he said, 'Kindly inform the Scottish Thistle Club that I have the honour of accepting their proposal to name me Honorary Chieftain of the Society. It would be idle for me to try to express the sentiments with which I accept this office. Wherever two or three Brither Scots are gathered together, they will be understood.' The Thistle Club also presented him with one of the small silver badges which are worn in the coat lapel by the members of the Society. How well he appreciated this small token of love on the part of his fellow-countrymen living in the middle of the Pacific may be gleaned from the following lines recently penned by Mrs. Stevenson to the Messrs. Scribner, New York, when acknowledging the receipt from that publishing firm of the gift of a copy of the Thistle Edition of Stevenson's works. She says—'I wish to convey my appreciation of the artistic merits and exquisite workmanship of the Thistle Edition of Mr. Stevenson's works. I wonder if you know that my husband always wore, pinned to his breast, a small silver thistle, the badge of a Scots Society to which he belonged in Honolulu?

Certainly the title of the edition is a very happy one. Stevenson was buried with this badge on his coat.

'During his stay in Honolulu he gave sittings to a clever English sculptor, Allen Hutchinson. The result was a life-size bust in clay, which was exhibited in the New Gallery, London, in 1895. This is believed to be the only study of Stevenson in clay done from life.[1] Mr. Hutchinson has in his possession a very fine cast of Stevenson's right hand and wrist. Every line in the thin taper fingers of the author is shown to perfection.

'One Who Knows Him,' wrote an account of Stevenson in his Samoan home for the *Woman at Home*, February 1894. From that article the following passages are selected:

A Visit to Vailima.

I first saw Vailima on the day after the Queen's birthday, and I overtook some members of the family who were returning from the British Consul's party at Apia. 'We call these our marble halls,' said Mr. Osbourne, 'because they cost so much.' And there before us stood the homestead that represented so much wealth that its proprietor has got the name among the natives of '*le ona*'—'the man who owns' great possessions.

Besides being costly, the work has been prolonged, and Mr. Stevenson's library is only now receiving its permanent fittings and furniture; and the spacious grounds continue to find employment for Samoans who wish to make money to meet the demands which 'civilisation' makes upon them.

But here we are at Vailima, and the master himself is looking out from that charming balcony in his mother's rooms in the part of the villa latest built. He returns the shout of greeting with which Mrs. Strong and Mr. Osbourne announced their approach, and shortly he descends to extend a genial welcome to his visitor.

This is no 'interview,' but a friendly call, and the conversation quickly turns on topics of mutual interest. But whatever the subject, you are soon under the spell of his fascinating

[1] This is an error; Mr. Augustus St. Gaudens modelled him from life. —ED.

earnestness and clear-cut sincerity of thought and speech. You may disagree with him, and find yourself unable to share his moral antipathies—or, more probably, find that he does not quite share yours; you may wonder at the influence he has to modify your thought and feeling, but you feel that he stands revealed before you as a man of wide and generous sympathies, and you shall say to yourself as you share his confidences: 'This man is fighting a good fight of faith in human kind and the truth of God in a world of disguises and of shams.'

We walk together through some of the rooms, and he shows me what will interest me as being the fulfilment of hopes expressed in reference to this place. Then the sight of his writing-table arrests him, and he hands me over to Mrs. Stevenson. For myself I am half reproaching myself for keeping him from his 'Brownie' for so long, and all the stronger is the feeling as Mrs. Stevenson explains that as there is an epidemic in the air he must keep apart from others at present, and cannot lunch with us.

We have left Mr. Stevenson in his mother's rooms, and we enter the library, which is not yet his workshop.

Long ago, in conversation with Mr. Stevenson, I heard with incredulity that South Sea Islanders in ancient days knew something of navigation, and marked their courses on the sea by means of charts. Here over the doorway is *the* most interesting chart I have ever seen, brought (I think) from the Gilberts. It consists of small twigs fastened together and intersecting each other from purpose and design. Will it now, I wonder, be used to adorn a tale of adventure? The fact of the chart is stranger than fiction.

There is a model of an elaborately constructed canoe from the Marshall Islands, and there are other reminiscences of the various South Sea Island homes of this remarkable family.

Old engravings and some portraits hang upon the walls of the library. Mrs. Stevenson points out the portrait of Gosse the poet, and of Mrs. Mary Wollstonecraft, who wrote on the rights of women long before that was a subject of discussion. The giver of the portrait of Mary Wollstonecraft was a lady who believed herself to be Mr. Stevenson's grandmother, or thought that it was a freak of nature or the spirits that he was not actually

her grandson, and accordingly there is on the back of the portrait the curious inscription, 'To Robert Louis Stevenson, from his grandmother.' . . .

I may be doing an unconscious injustice to some, but it seemed to me that, for the first time outside the circle where you ought and expect to meet them, I had met a man who, having no choice but to make his home in Samoa, was asking, 'How can I in my own special way help the work of making the people happy amongst whom I am to live?' He had written a tale; it seemed likely to interest and please a Polynesian audience. Should he tell it me? It was then that I heard with wonder and delight the story of 'The Bottle Imp.'

I have recently seen that tale in English, and the memories of that hour when I heard the author tell it have come back to me full and fresh and strong as ever. Ah me! if he had been the listener, how he could have reproduced the scene.

The sincerity and candour of the man as he prefaced the story by the remark that the idea upon which the tale was built was not his own; the alarming expenditure of nervous force as the story-teller paced the room; my own breathless interest in the man and in the weird and wonderful drama; and the question at the close—the *motif* of that labour of love, 'Would it translate?' All this is a memory to be cherished.'

'As a Samoan Chief.'

'Mr. R. L. Stevenson as a Samoan Chief' was the style of an article by Mr. W. H. Triggs (Editor of *The Press*, Christchurch, N.Z.) in *Cassell's Family Magazine*, February 1895. Although appearing after the death of R. L. S., a footnote explained that the paper had been written before that event. It need scarcely be premised that the writer of the article was one of the few who visited Stevenson in his island home. Touching the reason for Tusitala's settling at Vailima, Mr. Triggs says:

If you question him on the subject, he will tell you that, as regards health, Honolulu suited him equally well; the Alps probably better. The very reason that would make most

literary men avoid Samoa caused the author of 'Treasure Island' to select it.

'I chose Samoa instead of Honolulu, for instance,' he informed the present writer, 'for the simple and eminently satisfactory reason that it is less civilised. Can you not conceive that it is awful fun?'

To the nineteenth-century Philistine fresh from the luxury and excitement of a bustling civilisation, this is at first a hard saying.

When we have seen Mr. Stevenson at home, however, entering into the simple joys and sorrows of the interesting natives among whom he has cast his lot, living for the world's benefit, and yet himself keeping apart from its feverish allurements, we begin to understand the secret of his content.

After describing the surroundings of Vailima, the writer goes on to sketch out the daily life which the Stevenson family lived there. He mentions especially Mrs. Stevenson's success as gardener, saying that she 'has shown that even in the tropics, where white men shirk labour in the fields, and their wives usually lead the lives of valetudinarians, a good deal of hard physical work in the open air can be successfully accomplished by a lady of culture and refinement.'

She is in correspondence with Kew Gardens, Honolulu, Brisbane, Florida, etc., and is general referee on all matters of science. In addition to special charge of her own two experimental gardens, she has general supervision of all the additions and improvements. For example, she has just engineered a court of cement between the house and kitchen, working with her hands when her tongue failed her. Finally, this talented and energetic lady acts as doctor to the establishment should any of its members fall ill.

In his conversation with Stevenson, Mr. Triggs elicited an explanation of the curious fact that the Samoans would remain in the service of Tusitala while other

Europeans in the island found great difficulty in getting a native to work with any regularity or application. Stevenson said:

'The reason of this is neither high wages nor indulgent treatment. Samoans rather enjoy discipline; they like, however, to be used as gentlefolk. They like to be used with scrupulous justice; they like a service of which they can be proud. This we endeavour to give them by "trying" all cases of misdemeanour in the most serious manner with interpreters, forms of oath, etc., and by giving them a particular dress on great occasions. If, when you were in Apia, you saw a few handsome smart fellows in a striped jacket and a Royal Stuart tartan, they were Vai Lima boys. We have a tree at Christmas for all hands, a great native feast upon my birthday, and try in other ways to make them feel themselves of the family. Of course, no Samoan works except for his family. The chief is the master; to serve another clan may be possible for a short time, and to get money for a specific purpose. Accordingly, to ensure permanent service in Samoa, I have tried to play the native chief with necessary European variations. Just now it looks as if I was succeeding.

'Our last triumph,' the popular author continued, 'was at the annual missionary feast. Up to now our boys had always gone home and marched into the show with their own individual villages. This time, of their own accord, they marched in a body by themselves into the meeting, clad in the Vai Lima uniform, and on their entrance were saluted as "*Tama Ona*," which may be literally translated into Scotch, "MacRichies" (children of the rich man).'

Mr. Triggs then tells how Stevenson had to administer justice among his retainers, meting out fines and punishments, always, apparently, with the result that judge and judged remained on excellent terms. 'Lawn tennis was the favourite game with the "MacRichies," the servitors joining heartily with the family, nor did Mr. Osbourne or Mrs. Strong always win, for the natives became excellent players.'

The following very interesting conversation with Stevenson is recorded, the subject under discussion having been the last birthday feast of the master of Vailima:

'You must know,' he said, 'that every chief who respects himself in Samoa must have an officer called a *Tulafale*—usually Englished "speaking man." It is a part, and perhaps the most momentous, of this officer's attributions to cry out the names at the *ava*-drinking. This is done in a peculiar howl or song very difficult to acquire, and, I may say, to understand. He must also be fairly well versed in the true science of Samoan names, as no chief above a certain rank is ever "called" under his own name. He has another, an *ava* name for the purpose. Well, I had no *Tulafale*, and Mr. Osbourne held a competition, in which three or four of our boys howled against each other. The judgment of Apollo fell upon one boy, who was instantly a foot taller.

'I am sorry to make such confession of my disrespectability, but I must continue. I had not only no *Tulafale*—I had no *ava* name. I was called plain, bald "*Tusitala*" or "*Ona*," which is only a sobriquet at the best. On this coming to the knowledge of a high chief who was present, he paid me the graceful attention of giving me one of his own, and I was hurriedly warned before the event that I must look out and recognise the new name, Au-Mai-Taua-Ma-Le-Manuvao. The feast was laid on the floor of the hall—fifty feet by about eight of solid provisions. Fifteen pigs cooked whole, underground; two hundred pounds of beef, ditto of pork, two hundred pineapples, over four hundred head of taro, together with fish, chickens, Samoan prepared dishes, shrimps, oranges, sugar-cane, bananas, biscuit, and tinned salmon in proportion. The biscuit and tinned salmon, though not exactly to *our* taste, are a favourite luxury of the Samoans. By night—and we sat down at 4 P.M.—there was nothing left beyond a few oranges and a single bunch of bananas. This is not to say, of course, that it was all eaten—the Samoans are comparatively dainty at a feast; but so soon as we rose the arduous and difficult task of dividing what remained between the different guests was at once entered into,

and the retainers of our guests, white and Samoan, departed, laden, to the sea. The wretched giver of a feast thus wakens on the morrow with a clean house. But it is not all loss. All gifts or favours in Samoa are to be repaid in kind and in a proportion, and to my feast nobody had come empty-handed. It was rather strange to look out next morning and see my courtyard alive with cocks, hens, and chickens.'

Mr. Triggs concludes with the reflection that in the foregoing we can see why the Samoans remained faithful and loving towards Tusitala, and why he himself so keenly enjoyed his island life.

A Talk with Tusitala.

Not many 'interviews' with Stevenson were ever published—that is to say, personal articles of the type with which modern journalism has made us familiar. During the most interesting period of his life he was far beyond the range of the ordinary interviewer. Among the few records of this kind which exist, that contributed anonymously by Miss Marie Fraser, the well-known actress, to the *English Illustrated Magazine* in May 1894, is perhaps the most noteworthy. It was copiously illustrated. Miss Fraser writes:

Robert Louis Stevenson came to Samoa about four years ago. Weary with long wanderings among the islands of the Pacific, he determined to settle down and make for himself a permanent abiding-place. Samoa appeared to him as the Promised Land, and it at once took the fancy of the great writer. This is hardly to be wondered at, for the climate approaches perfection, and the scenery is lovely beyond description. The inhabitants have always possessed a certain civilisation and are a fine race, with graceful manners and amiable dispositions. Apia, the chief town, has the necessary postal facilities, being a port of call for the mail steamers running between Australia and San Francisco. These advantages, with the possibility of acquiring a large tract of land (a thing quite unattainable in other islands of the Pacific), determined

Mr. Stevenson to choose Samoa as a place for permanent residence, and led to the purchase of some four hundred acres of forest-land situated about three miles from Apia at an elevation ranging from six hundred to fifteen hundred feet.

The next step was to clear the land, and this, in the absence of roads and any organised labour, was a task of no small difficulty, but it was at last successfully accomplished, and the building of the house was commenced; but before this could proceed far it was absolutely necessary to make a road to the port of Apia, where a ship was discharging her cargo of American red wood, imported for the work.

A track through the forest with infinite trouble was at last made, and drays and horses having been brought from New Zealand, the work of hauling the timber and other materials up the mountain proceeded.

These once on the land the chief difficulties were over, and under the watchful eye of the master the work drew to a successful conclusion.

The house was designed by Mr. Stevenson, and with the additions lately made is a two-story building about one hundred feet in length and fifty feet in depth. It is surrounded by a very deep verandah, and is painted a peculiar shade of green, with a red roof. It is by far the largest building on the island, and from its elevated position, being six hundred feet above sea-level, it commands superb views over the forest and the ocean beyond. As before said, it is approached through a park. At a short distance stands a two-storied cottage, at present occupied by Mr. Lloyd Osbourne, Mr. Stevenson's stepson. A very large Samoan house stands at the back for the use of servants, who are all natives. Stables and native houses occupied by the field hands are a distinctive feature of this part of the estate. The kitchen garden is immediately at the back of the house, and is superintended by Mrs. Stevenson, who cultivates successfully many rare and curious plants. Beyond, stretching into the forest, are the plantations, where, under the care of Mr. Lloyd Osbourne; everything that can be grown in the tropics flourishes abundantly. A complete list would be out of place, so I will only mention the bread-fruit, pineapples, bananas, cacoa, India rubber, sugar-cane, ginger, kava, taro, grenadillas, oranges,

limes, citrons, cocoa-nuts, mangoes, vanilla, coffee, cinnamon, and guava. . . .

After a chat, 'tiffin' was announced, and we all adjourned to the great dark panelled hall, in the new wing which had been recently added to the house. As the guests were numerous it was rather a tight pack round the table; however, at last all were settled, and the bright-eyed native boys, clad in Stuart tartan lavalavas, handed round a quaint but delightful selection of American and native dishes. I sat next our host, and in the course of conversation the papers in different parts of the world that had more than suggested obituary notices of the novelist were mentioned.

'Yes,' he said, 'they have a curious partiality for ending my days. I hear of it months after the event has happened; but this climate is glorious and suits me admirably, so they are likely to have more copy for a considerable time to come.' . . .

After lunch we returned to the verandah, the tobacco and cigarette papers were passed round, and a 'boy' brought a burning coal for us to light up by. I noticed that the members of the household, who all smoke perpetually, take infinite pains to light their cigarettes any way but with matches. They will walk the whole length of the verandah to get a light from some one else, or send for a coal! While we were having our coffee and chatting, some emissaries arrived from a distant village chief to ask 'Tusitala' (the teller of stories), as they call Louis Stevenson, his opinion on some question of taxes. He gave the matter his profound consideration, and the two natives his opinion, which seemed quite to coincide with their own, for after a drink of kava, they departed evidently thoroughly satisfied with the result of their errand. Mr. Stevenson takes the greatest interest in all things connected with the natives and their politics, and will spare no trouble to help them in any way.

After settling this little affair of state, we went up the outside wooden staircase of the old part of the house to the upper verandah, from which a magnificent view is to be had—first across the lawn, then over the top of feathery branched palms the blue Pacific sparkling under the glorious tropic sun. Opening a glass door, my host ushered me into the library, a

delightful room full of curios, pictures, arms, and books. Not only were the walls lined with well-stocked shelves, but all the chairs and tables were covered with books, and piles were lying everywhere on the floor. Mr. Stevenson explained the disorder by saying—

'My cousin has been staying with us, and this was his room—he sometimes had difficulty in finding things, so he broke those chairs and flung the books about—wasting much profanity in the process! But it's much better to leave them alone—things are more easily found when they are lying about.'

Volumes which were often referred to were some bound-up numbers of the *National Observer*, the then editor—Mr. Henley, whose portrait graces the dining-room—being a much appreciated friend. After inspecting many interesting old volumes and newspapers, of which there is a wonderful collection, we tore ourselves from the fascinations of the books, and crossing a sort of flying bridge, entered the new section again, and found ourselves in Mr. Stevenson's own room, a barely furnished apartment where he does most of his writing.

'I can't write in that library,' continued the novelist; 'it's all so suitable for a literary man—it puts every idea out of my head. I like a little den like this with nothing in it to distract me—a deal kitchen table and a couple of chairs—but the latter are really mere luxuries—quite unnecessary. I have lived in every sort of place, and find that a mat on the ground is as comfortable as anything, as long as we have our own special brand of tobacco—we are slaves to that: we have allowed Three Castles to insinuate itself into our lives! Breakfast is brought to me here every morning at five, but I have often done an hour's work before that.' . . .

In a room on the ground floor, sacred to his mother, a shrewd, delightful old Scotch lady, were several volumes of cuttings she had collected—all the criticisms of her son's work both from American and European papers. 'Yes,' continued the son, 'the pictures they publish of me vary considerably. They represent every type from the most godlike creatures to the criminal classes; and their descriptions of me vary in proportion —from a man with a "noble bearing" to a "blighted boy." I don't mind what they say as a general rule, only I did object

when somewhere in the States an interviewer wrote, "A tall willowy column supported his classic head, from which proceeded a hacking cough." I could not forgive that!'

Miss Fraser then goes on to say how anxious Samoans of 'good family,' were to get themselves or their relatives into the service of Tusitala, and describes an incident of which she was a witness, when an old man appeared at Vailima with his son, and made a request that the latter, 'a fine stalwart fellow,' might be taken into the family as a house-boy. Miss Fraser continues:

While the discussion was going on Mrs. R. L. Stevenson told an amusing story about a 'house-boy' they had got from some remote village, who had never seen a two-storied house before and was lost in awe and admiration of the lofty magnificence of their mansion. On the morning of his arrival his education was commenced, and he was given a large bucket of water, and told to take it to the bed-rooms up above. He looked up, and, pointing, asked if it was there? On being answered in the affirmative, he seized the bucket in his teeth, and before any one could remonstrate, he had rushed up one of the posts of the verandah. The whole family ran up the staircase, and when they showed him that that was the usual mode of getting to those rooms, he was overpowered with delight, and for two or three days could do absolutely nothing but race up and down stairs chuckling and crowing in an ecstasy of joy. And when detachments of his friends came to visit him they were always taken to see the stairs the first thing!

Miss Fraser's leave-taking was unwilling, as we can well imagine it would be, and her final impression is thus recorded:

My host made the time fly. Everything interested him—simple little anecdotes—stories of people or animals—nothing seemed slow or boring. All too soon the sun crept towards the horizon, and tea was announced—a stirrup-cup to the globe-trotter

before her horse was brought round, for it was necessary to start in good time to get out of the mountain forest before dark, as there was no moon that night. . . . Soon my horse, with hibiscus blossoms stuck in his forehead-band, was brought round; most of the retainers came to wish the traveller God-speed, and after a hearty hand-shake from my host and hostess and their 'Toofaa! Soi fua?' ringing in my ears, I rode off towards the beach. It was worth missing the mail-boat, and having to spend weeks on board a schooner, to have the memory of such a visit.

From a typical journalistic sketch—slangy and slovenly—published in the San Francisco *Examiner* in December 1893, describing a visit to Stevenson at Vailima, these items are selected:

'Well, no; I'm not passionately fond of reporters, particularly the American variety; but come on in, and I'll have a go with you, anyhow.'

Such was the greeting with which Robert Louis Stevenson received the announcement of my name and business as we met on the broad verandah of his island home, far back in the hills of Upolu, the land of the southern cross and the sacred hen. There was a dim suspicion of a smile in the depths of his big black eyes as he extended his hand—a long, thin, cool, patrician hand, which fluttered for a moment in the palm of my large, moist paw. Then he withdrew a step, hitched up his trousers, and eyed me with the air of a man who could read the thoughts of another better than he could express them himself. I started in to explain that my business was not to misrepresent or garble the statements of earth's greatest living novelist.

An American 'Interviewer' at Vailima.

'That 's all right,' he said, laughing. 'Come in and see what there is to be seen, and ask us all sorts of questions. Then run riot with your pen, and when the paper comes, I'll read the article, damn till the air is blue, and everything will be all right.'

Reassured by this cheerful view of the future, I followed the marvellous man of letters into the house, where I had what

I've since tried to persuade myself was an interview with him. But, after carefully reviewing the hour we spent together, I am impressed with a vague, uneasy suspicion that he interviewed me. However, we exchanged large quantities of words of an uncompromising nature, interspersed with beer and anecdote. While extremely cordial in his manner, the novelist talked guardedly, and was careful not to commit himself on any vital point. He steered wide of politics and all other matters pertaining to the situation in the islands.

He sat directly in front of me, viewing the ceiling in a retrospective manner, and holding a home-made cigarette in his right hand. On the table within easy reach stood a can of tobacco, from which he rolled a fresh smoke as soon as the old one gave out. His attire consisted simply of a tight-fitting, sleeveless undershirt, cut *décolleté*, which set off his sparsely settled figure in startling relief. A pair of black trousers, rolled up half-way to the knees, completed the toilet of this eccentric genius of the South Seas. His feet were bare. While talking he rested his right foot across his left knee. It was a symmetrical foot, long and slender, and beautifully arched, and as he talked he gently toyed among his shapely toes with his disengaged hand. Somehow it occurred to me while noticing these peculiarities that any man who would describe Robert Louis Stevenson as half-clad when he was fully two-thirds covered, was taking a mean advantage of the author's hospitality.

In stature Stevenson is a little above the medium, but wofully thin and pale. His face is gaunt and haggard, and wears an expression of continual weariness. In fact, he is ill most of the time, but is uniformly good-natured in spite of his afflictions. Callers are numerous at the big house in the hills, dropping in at all hours of the day and on all kinds of business, but the novelist is always ready to meet these social obligations.

He rises at six o'clock in the morning, eats breakfast shortly after, and works till noon. At two o'clock in the afternoon he takes up his pen again and labours diligently till five o'clock. Sometimes he works too hard, and nervous prostration follows. It is then he seeks rest and recreation in a sea voyage, generally to Sydney and back, and the journey does him good.

This description of Stevenson's library is taken from an unacknowledged article in *Stevensoniana* (M. F. Mansfield, New York). The editor has failed to trace its authorship:

The room was walled from floor to ceiling with books, and I began to inspect them. To the left of the door were some 'yellow-backs,' but few, nor did I see in his library much trash of any description. Next came books of travel in almost every country in the world, the bulk of them, however, dealing with the Pacific. From Captain Cook down, it would be hard to name a Pacific travel book that has not found itself on the shelves at Vailima. Next, I am bound to say, came my first disappointment. I had always thought that Stevenson must have been a good classical scholar. . . . I found classics, indeed, but, alas! in Mr. Bohn's edition, while on the shelf beneath lay the originals uncut. It came to me as a positive blow to find the pages of the 'Odyssey' uncared for and unread, save in some translation. Of Horace he had many and good editions, and they seemed read and used; but of the Greek tragedians I found only 'Sophocles' in Professor Campbell's translation, and no edition of his plays save a small 'Œdipus the King.' . . .

The Library at Vailima.

Turning with regret from this shelf, I came next upon a fine collection of French works, beginning with a complete edition of Balzac, which had evidently been read with care. Much French fiction was here—Daudet's 'Tartarin,' 'Fromont Jeune et Risler Aîné,' 'Les Rois en Exil,' Guy de Maupassant, Prosper Mérimée, and the complete Victor Hugo, besides a swarm of the more ephemeral novels. Here, too, was a fine and complete edition of 'Wellington's Despatches' and several military treatises. Next to these came a good collection (be it always remembered that I speak of Samoa in Samoa, and fourteen thousand miles from the home of English and French publishing and printing) of historical works: Gibbon, of course; Milman, Von Ranke, and many of the old French chroniclers—Philippe de Comines especially—read and marked, no doubt, when Stevenson was writing 'The Black Arrow.' . . . There was a very complete collection of modern poets, hardly any of note being omitted.

I even saw a copy of 'J. K. S.'s' 'Lapsus Calami,' which surprised me, for Stevenson was neither a Cambridge nor a public school man.

Although so many reminiscences of Stevenson's life in Samoa have been given, the description of the feast held in honour of his forty-second birthday at Vailima in 1892, contained in a short anonymous contribution to the *Cornhill Magazine* of July 1894, is worthy of inclusion, as it gives a clear little word-picture of the unique and picturesque scene:

Tusitala's Birthday Feast.

When all was ready there was some debate in the household as to the correct procedure, according to the native courtesy, for the guests to go in to the feast, spread in a large native house which had just been completed. At last the intricacies of the Samoan etiquette were solved, and away we all trooped, Mr. Stevenson leading the way with his wife. Coming out of the darkness into the blaze of torchlight, a quaintly fantastic sight met our eyes. A native house thatched with branches of cocoa-nut palms, layers of palm leaves on the floor, and those again covered by many finely-woven tawny-coloured mats. It was difficult to believe that the mass of colouring which lay from five to six feet wide on the ground, and stretched from end to end of the house, was the feast; and it was only when we had arranged ourselves cross-legged on mats and our eyes became accustomed to the light that we realised the gigantic quantity of food thus spread out. It was entirely a native banquet, everything cooked and eaten 'faa Samoa' (*à la Samoan*), and all the eatables laid on banana leaves. There were dozens of pigs, varying in size from a rabbit to a sofa, the latter being the centre-piece; quantities of chickens and ducks, every kind of native fruit and vegetable, and before each guest a leaf of large pink prawns, which are plentiful in the waters from which Vailima takes its name. Scattered about everywhere were clusters of scarlet and cream-coloured hibiscus blossom, yellow allamanda, and fragrant, sweet-scented ginger; the posts of the house even being decorated with hibiscus and frangipani, with an art of which the Samoan is master.

After having enjoyed the prawns, and, in the absence of serviettes, were wondering what was to happen next, we were quite reassured by the appearance of the boys, who knelt with a basin of water and napkin beside each guest. Then the feast proceeded right merrily. Every one talked, and the pretty vivacious native girls laughed at the ignorance displayed by the few strangers in their lack of knowledge of what was good to eat and how to do it, and they spared no pains in instructing them. It was our first acquaintance with the versatile taro. There was taro-root baked like potatoes, taro-root minced and beaten up with cocoanut milk, and palousame, a great delicacy, made from the taro leaves and cocoa-nut cream. Then a mysterious dish, or rather leaf, was handed round, which the Europeans treated coldly, but which was received with marked distinction by the natives. It was a sad-coloured filmy mass, and was considered a great treat, as it consisted of green worms (*palolo*) that appear in the sea at certain intervals according to the state of the moon. From time to time cocoa-nuts with the tops knocked off were presented, and we drank out of them and passed them on. At intervals fresh banana leaves were handed to the guests, and by the time the banquet was half completed it was found how unnecessary plates were, and there might not be a knife or fork in creation for all any one cared! As for the French *chefs*—well, nobody ever enjoyed a dinner more than the strangers from far-away 'Peretania' appreciated the pleasure of being made welcome at such a delightful feast. . . .

At Vailima all are inveterate smokers, and all scorn to smoke anything but cigarettes made by themselves of their own American tobacco; and, as Louis Stevenson remarked, 'We are slaves to our own special brand.' They had a terrible reminiscence of having run out of their tobacco for, I think, two days, while cruising on board their yacht the *Casco*. The beef might 'give out' or the flour might 'give out,' but—their tobacco!

Sir Berry Cusack-Smith, K.C.M.G., who was Judge of the British Court at Samoa during Stevenson's life there, supplied to the *British Weekly* of October 20, 1898, some interesting reminiscences of the novelist, from which the following passages are quoted:

Much has been written about the barbaric splendour of Vailima. People who wrote such rubbish had either never seen Vailima, or had seen it after dinner when it appeared double. Its original charm lay in its situation—away from the haunts of men, three miles up a mountain track, set down right in the virgin forest, amid every luxuriance of tropical scenery, nestling under the shadow of Apia mountain, which rises sheer and grand from the very garden itself, and having a peep at the azure sea with the white foam dancing upon the distant coral reefs. Barbaric splendour if you will—but such as is to be met with in greater abandon, wilder richness, sweeter beauty, in a thousand other places close to the town of Apia.

A Samoan Resident's Reminiscences.

The house was at best a ramshackle wooden bungalow, no better than other bungalows in Samoa, beyond that it contained two nice rooms—one the library, and the other a sort of parody upon an old English oaken hall. It had one great peculiarity, and that was that it possessed two fireplaces. 'But though I have enjoyed sitting over the embers of my camp fire some eight hundred feet above the level of the sea, I cannot think that the chilliest of mortals could endure the heat of a fire within a house in Samoa. Nowadays a good carriage road leads all the way to Vailima, the bush is cleared, and villas are close around it on every side but one.

Sir Berry mentions that he had both R. L. S. and Mrs. Stevenson before him as plaintiffs, but at different times:

In 1891, I think it was, Stevenson had a quarrel with Mr. Hay, who was then acting as his master of the horse and general carrier. Mr. Hay has for some years been the justly respected and popular collector of customs. Vailima was nearly three miles from Apia, and the only approach was by a mere bush-path, rocky, muddy, and at times almost impassable, but always picturesque and beautiful. Carriages and carts were then almost unknown in Samoa, and even Jehu, the son of Nimshi, would have found it impossible to get a cart up to Vailima. So all the lumber, luggage, and luxuries required at Vailima had to be carted up on the backs of horses. Stevenson imported two fine grey carthorses, and in charge of Mr. Hay

these beasts carried up many a heavy load through the tropical bush. A dispute arose as to the amount of food which these grey Bucephaluses consumed, and there was angry recrimination over a load of limes which Mr. Hay carried to Apia for his own benefit. It was agreed to submit the matter to me, acting as arbitrator. I can see Stevenson now sitting at one side of the lawyer's table, with Mr. Hay opposite to him. Robert Louis got so excited that I had to stop the case while he got water to drink to cool his agitation. He lost his case, though he got some satisfaction, if I remember correctly, over the limes which Mr. Hay had carried contrary to orders. . . .

A circus came to Samoa, a circus with good horses, and a by no means bad entertainment. But as it had to wait in Samoa four weeks until the next steamer arrived, it had soon raked in all the available dollars, and ruin stared it in the face. To raise the passage-money to leave Samoa, the great tent and one of the horses had to be sold. Stevenson bought the horse, a big piebald steed, and on this he used to ride into town, looking in his velvet coat, his long locks, and his quaint yachting-cap, that had long lost all semblance of its original shape, like the circus impersonator of Dick Turpin's ride to York. Many a time have I met him on this circus horse until it tried the tight-rope trick on its own account, and strangled itself with the rope by which it was tethered. . . .

Like all great men, Stevenson had his idiosyncrasies. One was that he endeavoured to make to each person whom he met some remark which they would remember and quote as a saying of Stevenson's. I have had many of these remarks quoted to me, and I cannot honestly say that any of them were brilliant or worthy of the great novelist. I was up at Vailima one afternoon talking to Stevenson on business, when I noticed that he was no longer paying any attention to what I was saying. He was quite evidently preparing a remark, a remark that I was to remember and quote. I 'll quote it now. 'I 've been weeding the lawn,' he said to me. 'I think there is no occupation so engrossing as weeding. I get so enthralled by it, weeding out each tiny weed, that I cannot tear myself away. They have to come out and literally drag me in to my meals. I could weed all day.' I replied frivolously that I personally preferred to pay

a native a dollar to weed for me, especially under a tropical sun, and that I did not require much dragging in to my meals.

As a Sunday-school Teacher.

An interesting reminiscence of Stevenson as a Sunday-school teacher was given by Miss Large at the annual meeting of the Huddersfield Auxiliary on the 16th instant. Miss Large was an L. M. S. educational missionary on Stevenson's island of Samoa. A friend told the novelist of a state of things in which the lady missionary was both superintendent and teacher. The result was that R. L. Stevenson agreed to help in the school. The lessons just then were on the life of Moses.

'But,' said he, 'I am quite sure I cannot tell them of Moses. Can I speak about the pyramids?'

Miss Large replied that he could tell them anything of interest in the life of Moses.

After the first experience in school the novelist found the continual humming noise unbearable. But this difficulty was overcome by the superintendent allowing the use of her sitting-room.

One day he said: 'I cannot get the boys to ask a question; what must I do?'

'Do your own way,' Miss Large wisely answered.

On the third Sunday he had removed the difficulty. 'I have offered sixpence to any boy who will ask a question.' But not until half a crown had been offered was the question asked. However, R. L. Stevenson was not long a teacher. His friend, Lloyd Osbourne, assured Miss Large that the strain was too great for so weak a man, and he could not possibly go on teaching. Mrs. Stevenson objected too.

The end was that the novelist was obliged to give up his work in the school, but this may be remembered as just like his noble mind. 'He had so high an ideal of Sunday-school work that he would not give up without obtaining an honourable release.'—*British Weekly*, September 19, 1902.

Mrs. E. H. Strain, the author of 'A Man's Foes' and other novels, met R. L. Stevenson at Apia during a holiday cruise in the South Seas in the spring of 1894. Her notes of the meeting—one of the last in which

the exile was fated to grasp the hand of a visitor from over seas, and especially from his 'ain countree'—have never been published. Mrs. Strain has kindly transcribed from her diary of the cruise the pages which touch upon this meeting with the novelist, and they are here printed for the first time:

April 25th.—A day to remember! On it, if one may indulge in a paradox which states a simple fact, we have made the personal acquaintance of an old friend. We have been to Samoa, and have met Robert Louis Stevenson.

Meeting with a Fellow-Novelist at Apia.

There must be many people who feel as we do, that a man who has translated into the soul's vernacular thoughts which come to most of us in hieroglyph—who has caught and delineated some of the visions which touch all humanity with a flying wing and escape—has vindicated his right to the title of Friend. It is not only as the writer of entrancing stories told in a 'style' which has fascination almost greater than the matter that we and other discerning critics regard Mr. Stevenson. That mastery of language which induces words to do just exactly what is required of them, so that a single one may take the place of a whole illustrative metaphor or descriptive paragraph, is the badge of one guild only—the Guild of the Poets. But, of course, much of Stevenson's work has been of a kind to make this manifest even to eyes incapable of recognising a poet's prose.

Poets, nevertheless, have as good a right to their privacy as the least articulate of their pensioners; nor should we have intruded on Stevenson's had our sole claim to his acquaintance been our appreciation of his work. Fortunately for ourselves, we had a better title; one which we thought justified us in writing to ask him, if he had time and the inclination, to meet us on the arrival of the SS. *Alameda* at the port of Apia.

The whole experience has been as much like a fairy-tale as anything we are likely ever to bear part in. The island itself, solid and actual as it is—a greener and glorified Arran—belongs by virtue of his residence there to 'the realms of gold.' It is undeniably part of his fief from Apollo. Who ever thinks of it, now, save as the dwelling-place of 'R. L. S.'? And in his

presence it would seem out of keeping to maintain too conscious a grip of reality. He looks as if he might himself be made of the right dream-stuff, so fragile, so transparently thin is he. The hands especially are fined away to such a degree of tenuity as to suggest an 'astral' rather than a corporeal body; yet there is a true mundane touch upon the pointed finger-tips, stained as they are with the perpetual rolling of cigarettes.

Was he always so thin, one wonders?—or is it his residence in this Enchanted Isle which has transformed him into another Prospero,[1] with Ariel added and weight subtracted? One knows, presently, that one should have expected to find him so. The pelican mother-bird must be lean, lean, lean in her nursing-time; so too must it be with your intensely imaginative artist, in whatever kind; for not only what he gives to the world, but what he lives by, must be drawn from his own mind and heart. Dante, as we know, was 'kept lean for many years' by his Divine Comedy. It is hard upon the Pelican! and why, *why* cannot we, the callow nurseling, give back something more helpful than inarticulate gratitude?

For the rest, despite the dimness of eyesight caused by this predominant perception, we have carried away a mental portrait which may paddle the *Cigarette* of the 'Inland Voyage'; may lie in the sleeping sack (the flap-eared cap well drawn down over the ears) upon the hill-sides of the Cevennes—the donkey cropping gently near by; may move as 'Amateur Emigrant' among the other steerage passengers, endeavouring to get down to the essential ground of common human gentlehood. Hair thin and dark; eyes dark, set far apart, less keen than penetrating, less alert than receptive; large forehead, neither too high for its breadth nor too broad for its height; complexion weather-stained, particularly upon the lips. Altogether a face more suggestive of power and insight than of imagination; which strikes one as strange in one whose differentia is the last quality, until one remembers Ruskin's theory that the essence of the imaginative faculty is its power to pierce to the heart of things and see them as they are.

It seemed at first like a disappointment to find that there was

[1] This comparison was written before the writer had heard of Henley's sonnet.—E. H. S.

not time to visit Vailima. Now, however, that things have begun to fall into perspective, I am not sure but it was an express device of the propitious Fates, to steer us clear of the rocks of commonplace and bathos. For it set R. L. S. to work to think of some other thing which he might do to entertain us. As was to be expected, he hit upon something in keeping with himself; upon something, consequently, which makes an appropriate background to the whole picture. Imagine us all led through a shady taro-swamp to the abode of a great Samoan chief and warrior, a man handsomely decorated with scars of combat, which scars he is pleased to exhibit at 'Tusitala's' request to Tusitala's friends. His house is rather like the epidermis of a haystack, supposing that a haystack could be flayed and that the skin should afterwards retain its shape and shagginess; the perpendicular part is, however, much lower in proportion, and consists of wall and doorway alternated all round in nearly equal parts. The furniture consists chiefly of a carpeting of fine matting; there are also a number of palm-leaf baskets suspended from the roof, evidently to hold provisions, as well as a couple of bird cages with pet birds in them. The master of the house was lying on a mattress when Stevenson, conducted by an attendant, entered a step or two in advance of the rest of us. There was an exclamation—'Tusitala! Alofa,' or some such word, from the gladiator, who rose to his feet, courteously, if artlessly, giving his simple couch a kick which sent it into the background. We were then introduced to him, and a general shaking of hands ensued, after which we were invited to seat ourselves like so many tailors on the matted floor. We took our places, which were ceremonially indicated to us in order of dignity, with a degree of ease and grace inversely proportioned to our age and solidity.

A black-eyed little son came and placed himself at one side of our host, a black-eyed little daughter at the other; the wives in the background began to prepare 'kava' for our refreshment. We felt that the time had arrived for small-talk, but the small-talk somehow was not forthcoming. One's eyes, one's brain, were too well occupied with better things. I looked from our ethereal Prospero-Ariel to his muscular friend (that chief is really the very model of the ideal gladiator, scarred as aforesaid), and then

pulled myself together with a horrid fear that I had been staring, and begged R. L. S. to ask our host what he thought of the prospects of the copra-crop?

The brewing of the kava was, however, part of the entertainment; it would have been bad manners *not* to have stared at that. In absolute correctness the root[1] should have been chewed in our presence by the 'Maid of the Village,' but I am thankful to say that this pedantry of etiquette was for once dispensed with. Perhaps R. L. S. explained that our time was limited; anyhow the root was pounded instead, in a sort of quern, by the woman who had ushered us into the presence of the chief. I am not sure whether she was or wasn't one of his wives. The woman who performed the other part of the brewing certainly was. Both of them wore much the same sort and quantity of garments as Europeans do, but the chief and his children wore an airy costume, consisting of a long towel arranged as skirt (or kilt) and cape. After being pounded, the kava-root was placed in a flattish wooden dish on three feet—a cross between bowl and platter — and drenched with water. Then the woman who had been looking on took water and ostentatiously washed her hands; after which she proceeded to squeeze and knead the root in water, with great energy and thoroughness. Next she gathered a good handful of it into a fibrous wisp which served as filter, and wrung it out into a beautiful bowl, as thin as china, of cocoa-nut shell, held for her by the other woman. We looked on with respectful interest, clapping our hands slightly and seriously at Stevenson's instigation and example, by way of congratulation on the completion of the work. Then she who held the cup brought it and presented it with a bow and a Samoan salutation to me; I, duly instructed, responded with the proper answer, bowed to the company seriatim, and drank!—an act not far removed from heroism, since it is obligatory to finish what is given one, and is the height of bad manners to leave any in the cup. If one can manage it at one draught, the compliment is so much the greater. Not having had the advantage of a German university training, I could not manage the one-draught feat, but I did it in two, and the audience was kind enough to

[1] Of the *Piper Methysticum*.—E. H. S.

applaud me cordially. R. L. S. was next helped, and after him the rest of the party, in the same order as the assignment of places, all of us acquitting ourselves to the apparent satisfaction of the entertainers. 'Kava' is really not bad, even on a first acquaintance: it reminds one of Gregory's mixture, but the nasty taste is somehow left out. I am credibly informed that one gets even passionately fond of it, after an interval of suspense (caused possibly by the ceremonial preparation of the root). After the kava episode, pretty speeches and handshakes were exchanged, and we took leave of our Samoan entertainers.

There is nothing else fit to be put second to this; it is our 'Eclipse.' It is the climax of our journey. It is true that Stevenson took us for a walk to the town or village of Apia, during which expedition (such is the malignity of life!) a remark which was honestly meant by one of us to be friendly and sympathetic got transformed by mere awe into something closely resembling mere insult. It is true that he saw us in safety on board the *Alameda*; that he sat in the saloon with us and talked a little good-bye talk. But the culminating scene of the whole series is that in the Samoan warrior's home, East and West brought together by 'Tusitala's' central presence.

The natives—fine-looking people—swarmed round the big ship, plying their favourite industry of diving for coins in deep water; but they failed to distract our minds even for a moment from the brown-suited, flat-capped figure in the stern of a boat which was being rowed to the landing-place. We threw them small change; we admired the dexterity with which they caught the coins before they had sunk many yards. But all the same we saw them 'with half an eye'—and perhaps that half-eye *was* someone else's! For when the figure in the boat turned back to us, before disappearing round the stern of the *Curaçoa*, every right hand in our party was raised in instantaneous response to the parting wave of his.

With half an eye, too, we looked at the beautiful island, green to its topmost peak; at the calm lagoon, azure fringed with white, from which it rises; at the crimson sunset glory which presently enveloped them. R. L. S. came between us and all that; it derived the best of its charm to the mind from its fitness to be a poet's dwelling.

I do not say his home—for home, we know, is where the heart is, and his heart is with us in Scotland. Numberless trifles, inconsiderable enough in themselves, show that clearly. 'You're not making use of your opportunities!' he said to one of us just before he left the ship; 'you haven't asked me something that young ladies always ask.' Her eyes lighted up. 'Oh, will you?' said she, and ran for pen and paper. 'A condemned man wishes all good things to Miss H—— M—— S——,'[1] he put, and signed it. 'Why *condemned*?' she asked. 'Isn't perpetual exile enough,' he asked, 'even without sentence of death hanging over one's head?' That this invigorating Pacific climate may one day reverse both sentences cannot be more his own wish than it is ours.

Stevenson and Father Damien.

One of the most brilliant things Stevenson ever wrote was a defence of Father Damien, who worked among the lepers of the Hawaiian Islands at Molokai. Damien was accused of having fallen from his priestly position, of having, among all the horror of that living death, forgotten the purity of a Christian's life. It was alleged that, in the torture of despair, Damien, of whose noble self-sacrifice the world was justly proud, had strayed temporarily from his martyr's path.

Stevenson heard that some Protestant clergyman of Honolulu had made the accusation. I believe that he had never done so. Stevenson wrote a pamphlet so bitter, so brilliant, so stinging, that the clergyman had to resign his living.

In after years Stevenson learned that he had wronged this clergyman, and Mr. Clark, a friend of Stevenson's, himself a missionary in Samoa, told me that Stevenson said he regretted having written that pamphlet in defence of Damien more than anything else he had ever written. This was only a month or so before his death. Had Stevenson lived, I believe that he would have publicly recalled the pamphlet.—SIR BERRY CUSACK-SMITH in the *British Weekly*, October 20, 1898.

In his presidential address at the 68th annual meeting of the Entomological Society, Mr. George H. Verrall mentioned several amusing instances of what an experienced entomologist might

[1] Quoted from memory.—E. H. S.

do in the way of turning his knowledge to practical account. Commentators on the work of the late Robert Louis Stevenson were unable, but anxious, to discover whether the notes made by him in a certain book were written before or after he had taken up his residence in Samoa. A fly which had been squeezed between the pages settled the question, for Mr. Verrall at once pronounced the remains as those of an insect peculiar to the Polynesian islands. —*Daily News.*

The Fly in the Notes.

In *M'Clure's Magazine*, July 1895, a *verbatim* account was given of Stevenson's address to a large company of Samoan chiefs on a notable occasion. The circumstances are thus explained:

A few months before the death of the late Robert Louis Stevenson, certain Samoan chiefs whom he had befriended while they were under imprisonment for political causes, and whose release he had been instrumental in effecting, testified their gratitude by building an important piece of road leading to Mr. Stevenson's Samoan country house, Vailima. At a corner of the road there was erected a notice, prepared by the chiefs and bearing their names, which reads:

'The Road of the Loving Heart.'

'THE ROAD OF THE LOVING HEART.

'Remembering the great love of his highness, Tusitala, and his loving care when we were in prison and sore distressed, we have prepared him an enduring present, this road which we have dug to last for ever.'

On the completion of the road Mr. Stevenson entertained the chiefs and other guests at a native feast, wherein the food was spread upon the ground, on a tablecloth of green banana leaves; and at the close of the repast, Mr. Stevenson delivered [his] address.

The speech dealt mainly with island politics, an ever-changing theme, and for that reason the only passages chosen for reproduction refer to the personal and romantic side of the celebration. After touching on the imprisonment of the chiefs and their expression of gratitude in offering to make the road, Stevenson went on:

I was tempted at first to refuse this offer. I knew the country to be poor; I knew famine threatening; I knew their families long disorganised for want of supervision. Yet I accepted, because I thought the lesson of that road might be more useful to Samoa than a thousand bread-fruit trees, and because to myself it was an exquisite pleasure to receive that which was so handsomely offered. It is now done; you have trod it to-day in coming hither. It has been made for me by chiefs—some of them old, some sick, all newly delivered from a harassing confinement, and in spite of weather unusually hot and insalubrious. I have seen these chiefs labour valiantly with their own hands upon the work, and I have set up over it, now that it is finished, the name of 'The Road of Gratitude' (the road of loving hearts), and the names of those that built it. *In perpetuam memoriam*, we say, and speak idly. At least so long as my own life shall be spared, it shall be here perpetuated; partly for my pleasure and in my gratitude, partly for others, to continually publish the lesson of this road.

His address was concluded in these words:

Chiefs, on this road that you have made, many feet shall follow. The Romans were the bravest and greatest of people; mighty men of their hands, glorious fighters and conquerors. To this day in Europe you may go through parts of the country where all is marsh and bush, and perhaps after struggling through a thicket you shall come forth upon an ancient road, solid and useful as the day it was made. You shall see men and women bearing their burdens along that even way, and you may tell yourself that it was built for them perhaps fifteen hundred years before—perhaps before the coming of Christ—by the Romans. And the people still remember and bless them for that convenience, and say to one another, that as the Romans were the bravest to fight, so they were the best at building roads.

Chiefs, our road is not built to last a thousand years, yet in a sense it is. When a road is once built it is a strange thing how it collects traffic; how every year, as it goes on, more and more people are found to walk thereon, and others are raised up to repair and perpetuate it and keep it alive; so that perhaps even this road of ours may, from reparation to reparation, continue

to exist and be useful hundreds and hundreds of years after we are mingled in the dust. And it is my hope that our far-away descendants may remember and bless those who laboured for them to-day.

Stevenson's Death.

In a letter to Mr. Sidney Colvin, published in the *Times*, January 7, 1895, Mr. Lloyd Osbourne states that on the day he died Stevenson had said he felt so strong and well that if the worst came to the worst in Samoa, with Germany intriguing for possession of the islands, he would go to America and try to raise public opinion by a course of lectures. Mr. Osbourne's letter is dated December 3, 1894, and reads:

When we returned from summoning the doctor it was dark, the lights were lit in the great room, and Louis was lying on a chair, breathing very labouredly. He was unconscious from the beginning, and for about an hour we waited about him seeing his life ebb away. He was dressed in his sailor's jumper and trousers, and kept his high colour to the last. When he passed away we lowered the great union jack we fly over the house and covered the body with the flag he loved. It is a cause of thankfulness that death came suddenly, finding him busy and happy. It was just at sunset and time for dinner, and he and my mother were preparing some little delicacy together, a salad for the evening meal. He got up a bottle of extra wine, too, for this little feast, some old Burgundy that he prized. My mother caught him as he suddenly seemed to turn faint and giddy, and asked her, 'Do I look strange?' and she tried to reassure him. As she managed to get him into the great room and into a chair, he showed her where the pain was in his head, and this was his last consciousness. There he lies now, in the big room with the flag cast over him, his hands joined together across his breast, and our poor people showing the last signs of respect within their power by watching the night out where he lies.

Under date of December 5, 1894, Mr. Osbourne continues:

My previous letter was interrupted by the arrival of several of

our truest Samoan chiefs with their last presents for Louis, the fine mats that the body of a great man must be wrapped in. All night they sat around his body, in company with every one of our people, in stolid silence. It was in vain that I attempted to get them away. 'This is the Samoan way,' they said, and that ended the matter. They kissed his hand one by one as they came in. It was a most touching sight. You cannot realise what giving these mats means. They are the Samoan's fortune. It takes a woman a year to make one, and these people of ours were of the poorest. It was always his wish to be buried on the top of the mountain that bounds Vailima. He even had a window cut in his study so that he could always see the place. I was determined that his wishes should be followed out, so I sent that night to our best friends to bring in their men. Forty came with their chiefs, and several of Mataafa's chiefs came too. [The letter concludes with a description of the funeral.]

Stevenson's Grave.

A writer in *Harper's Weekly* gave a description of Stevenson's tomb on Mount Vaea as he saw it in 1897, shortly after it had been completed. The memorial was built chiefly by the loyal devotion of the natives, without whose active assistance the carrying out of such a work in so inaccessible a place would have been quite impossible. The writer says:

The tomb rises in the middle of a small plateau on the summit of the mountain. A few trees were cut away to let the sunshine filter in; beyond the branches, framed like a picture in festoons of creepers and orchids, lies the district of A'ana on the one hand, Atua on the other, with their rolling green hills and distant mountains touched here and there by the silver gleam of waterfall and river; and further off, and through the trees in front, spreads the Pacific Ocean, the coral reef skirting the shore marked by curling lines of foam. At the foot of the spur of Vaea lies Vailima, with the red roofs, lawns, and hedges of hibiscus flowers—small from that distance, like a toy farm in a child's game.

The tomb is an exact copy of those used for Samoan chiefs—merely a block of concrete, shaped like a sarcophagus, resting on a huge square solid block made of the same material. Mr. Graham Balfour gives the following particulars of the last resting-place of R. L. S.: 'On either side there is a bronze plate; the one bearing the words in Samoan, "The Tomb of Tusitala," followed by the speech of Ruth to Naomi, taken from the Samoan Bible:—

'"Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried."

'At the sides of the inscription were placed a thistle and a hibiscus flower.

'Upon the other panel, in English, is his own *Requiem*:—

A ROBERT LOUIS Ω
1850 STEVENSON. 1894

'Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.'

'Since his death the chiefs have tabooed the use of firearms upon the hillside where he lies, that the birds may live there undisturbed, and raise about his grave the songs he loved so well.'

The Grave by Moonlight.

Can I close these reminiscences more fitly than by taking you in imagination to Stevenson's grave? It was a favourite expedition of mine, and I have seen it in all its aspects. I have been there when it lay bathed in the golden sunshine, recalling the brilliancy of the successes of the great dead. I have seen it in those exquisite moments when the day is merging into the tropical night. There is no twilight. One minute it is day, a few minutes later you

realise that it is night. All looks ghostly and indistinct, and the dying of those glorious South Sea days never failed to fill one's heart with a tinge of sadness, a sense of the immensity of the oceans that separated us from the Old Country, a wistful longing to see faces and forms that we might never see again. And in this aspect the tomb appealed to one's sympathies; one recalled the failing health, the cutting short of that brilliant career, the separation from all that England would have lavished on him of hero-worship, of society, of encouragement. And I have seen that tomb gleaming white and pure in the sweet moonlight, as our hope is that this our brother doth in the light of the all-merciful Reviewer.—SIR B. CUSACK-SMITH in the *British Weekly*, October 20, 1898.

A Later Visit to Vaea.

To the *British Weekly*, June 27, 1901, Miss Bessie S. Robertson contributed a sketch entitled 'A Visit to Stevenson's Grave.' After observing how greatly changed is Vailima since the death of its owner, his house having been entirely demolished in the Samoan war, though rebuilt on the original plan by the present owner of the estate, the writer goes on to describe her difficult climb up to the grave:

For the first hundred yards the track was fairly well marked, and I followed with ease my guide—a young half-caste girl who had known Stevenson well. Then the bush grew denser and darker; the track disappeared from time to time; the soil was wet and slippery, and steamed under our feet in the hot air. Still higher, there was hardly foothold on the steep face of the hill. Sometimes a rock blocked the zigzag path, sometimes a treacherous vine caught the foot, and at all times mosquitos hummed dangerously near. A sound as of voices above us, where I knew no human foot had trod for months, recalled to me Stevenson's mention of his astonishment and perplexity the first time he heard similar sounds when clearing the bush. By the way, the bush in which he was accustomed to work, and of which he has given such vivid pictures in his letters, lies away inland behind the house, and it is believed that Stevenson himself never climbed the mountain on whose top he wished to

be laid. Had he done so, he might possibly have chosen some other spot more easy of access, for the task which his loyal, devoted Samoan friends so willingly undertook, of carrying the coffin up the face of this precipitous mountain, is almost inconceivable. Thrice my heart nearly failed me, and thrice I looked at the top of the bush-covered wall which seemed to overhang me; then I grasped my stick and toiled upwards again.

How soon was the climb forgotten when I reached the clear plateau on the top, and saw before me that lonely grave, sacred to Scotchmen all the world over, which thousands have pictured in fancy, and so few have ever seen! It is covered by a large cement slab, about a foot and a half high, with a smaller oblong one on the top, both of which were made on the spot. They were strewn over with dead leaves, which my first impulse was to sweep off, but my second thought was restraining, if somewhat whimsical. Why should I, a newcomer, a pilgrim of an hour, brush away those leaves which had all their lifetime watched over the grave of a hero, had sheltered it from rain and wind, and smiled upon it in sunshine, and which now, even when dead, were its only watchers? Near the grave were a few ante-bushes, bearing a rich flower like a deep crimson rose. I gathered a handful and laid them on the stone among the withered leaves, and thought of the boy who had roamed the streets of Edinburgh forty years ago, and climbed the green Pentlands near his much-loved childhood's home, and whose life and death on this remote island have linked Samoa for all time with our fair northern city and the quaint little hamlet of Swanston.

IX

STEVENSON THE MAN

APPARITION

Thin-legged, thin-chested, slight unspeakably,
Neat-footed and weak-fingered: in his face—
Lean, large-boned, curved of beak, and touched with race,
Bold-lipped, rich-tinted, mutable as the sea,
The brown eyes radiant with vivacity—
There shines a brilliant and romantic grace,
A spirit intense and rare, with trace on trace
Of passion, impudence, and energy.
Valiant in velvet, light in ragged luck,
Most vain, most generous, sternly critical,
Buffoon and poet, lover and sensualist:
A deal of Ariel, just a streak of Puck,
Much Antony, of Hamlet most of all,
And something of the Shorter-Catechist.—

W. E. Henley,
'A Book of Verses,' 1888.

The selections which follow refer to the personal appearance and traits of character exhibited by Stevenson to those who enjoyed his friendship or acquaintance. In other sections of the work personal touches are given, but it has been thought best not to detach these from their context, even at the risk of making the present chapter seem meagre and incomplete.

From the remarkable paper by Mr. W. E. Henley,

called forth by the publication of Mr. Graham Balfour's 'Life' of Stevenson, and published in the *Pall Mall Magazine*, December 1901, the author has kindly permitted the copious excerpts which follow. Although one of the paragraphs refers to Stevenson the artist, the editor has preferred to retain it in its present relationship. It is to be understood that the footnotes are those appended to the article when it first appeared:

'The Two Stevensons.'

For me there were two Stevensons: the Stevenson who went to America in '87; and the Stevenson who never came back. The first I knew, and loved; the other I lost touch with, and, though I admired him, did not greatly esteem. My relation to him was that of a man with a grievance; and for that reason, perhaps—that reason and others—I am by no means disposed to take all Mr. Balfour says for gospel, nor willing to forget, on the showing of what is after all an official statement, the knowledge gained in an absolute intimacy of give-and-take which lasted for thirteen years, and includes so many of the circumstances of those thirteen years that, as I believe, none living now can pretend to speak of them with any such authority as mine. This, however, is not to say that Mr. Balfour's view of his famous cousin is not warranted to the letter, so far as he saw and knew. I mean no more than that the Stevenson he knew was not the Stevenson who came to me (that good angel, Mr. Leslie Stephen, aiding) in the old Edinburgh Infirmary; nor the Stevenson I nursed in secret, hard by the old Bristo Port, till he could make shift to paddle the *Arethusa*; nor the Stevenson who stayed with me at Acton after selling Modestine,[1] nor even the Stevenson who booked a steerage berth to New York, and thence trained it 'across the plains,' and ended for the time being as a married man and a Silverado squatter; though I confess that in this last avatar the Stevenson of Mr. Balfour's dream had begun, however

[1] It was now, I think, that he made the immense discovery that a girl on a certain level of life has eyes for nothing masculine a plane or two below that level. At all events, he wore his tourist's raiment, and was infinitely gratified to be able to report, after one of his rambles, that a casual wayfarer had asked him for a fill of tobacco, and had called him 'Sir.'

faintly and vaguely, to adumbrate himself, and might have been looked for as a certainty by persons less affectionate and uninquiring than those by whom he was then approached. Mr. Balfour does me the honour of quoting the sonnet into which I crammed my impressions of my companion and friend; and, since he has done so, I may as well own that 'the Shorter Catechist' of the last verse was an afterthought. In those days he was in abeyance, to say the least; and if, even then, *il allait poindre à l'horizon* (as the composition, in secret and as if ashamed, of 'Lay Morals' persuades me to believe he did), I, at any rate, was too short-sighted to suspect his whereabouts. When I realised it, I completed my sonnet; but this was not till years had come and gone, and the Shorter Catechist, already detected by more than one, was fully revealed to me. . . .

At bottom Stevenson was an excellent fellow. But he was of his essence what the French call *personnel*. He was, that is, incessantly and passionately interested in Stevenson. He could not be in the same room with a mirror but he must invite its confidences every time he passed it; to him, there was nothing obvious in time and eternity, and the smallest of his discoveries, his most trivial apprehensions, were all by way of being revelations, and as revelations must be thrust upon the world; he was never so much in earnest, never so well pleased (this were he happy or wretched), never so irresistible, as when he wrote about himself. Withal, if he wanted a thing, he went after it with an entire contempt for consequences. For these, indeed, the Shorter Catechist was ever prepared to answer; so that, whether he did well or ill, he was safe to come out unabashed and cheerful. He detested Mr. Gladstone, I am pleased to say; but his gift of self-persuasion was scarce second to that statesman's own.[1] He gave himself out for the most open-minded of men: to him one point of view was as good as another; Age's was respectable, but so was Youth's; the Fox that had a tail was no whit more considerable than the Fox whose tail was lost. *Et patati, et patata.*

[1] Mr. Balfour again reminds us of what he thought of Gordon, and how he would fain have joined the Curtins, and fought with them the obscure and bloody tyranny which then lay over Ireland. 'Tis at least as pleasant to recall that once, after a certain famous victory, he would not allow himself to be addressed, for days, except as 'Mr. Peiwar Kotal Stevenson.'

'Twas all 'as easy as lying' to him, for 'twas all in the run of his humanity. But in the event it was academic; for where he was grossly interested, he could see but one side of the debate. . . . No better histrion ever lived. But in the South Seas the mask got set, the 'lines' became a little stereotyped. Plainly the Shorter Catechist was what was wanted. And here we are: with Stevenson's later letters and Mr. Graham Balfour's estimate.

'Tis as that of an angel clean from heaven, and I for my part flatly refuse to recognise it. Not, if I can help it, shall this faultless, or very nearly faultless, monster go down to after years as the Lewis I knew, and loved, and laboured with and for, with all my heart and strength and understanding. In days to come I may write as much as can be told of him. Till those days come, this protest must suffice. If it convey the impression that I take a view of Stevenson which is my own, and which declines to be concerned with this Seraph in Chocolate, this barley-sugar effigy of a real man; that the best and most interesting part of Stevenson's life will never get written—even by me; and that the Shorter Catechist of Vailima, however brilliant and distinguished as a writer of stories, however authorised and acceptable as an artist in morals, is not my old, riotous, intrepid, scornful Stevenson at all—suffice it will.

For the rest, I think he has written himself down in terms that may not be mistaken, nor improved, in a fragment of an essay on morals printed in the Appendix to the 'Edinburgh Edition.' 'An unconscious, easy, selfish person,' he remarks, 'shocks less, and is more easily loved, than one who is laboriously and egotistically unselfish. There is at least no fuss about the first; but the other parades his sacrifices, and so sells his favours too dear. Selfishness is calm, a force of nature: you might say the trees are selfish. But egoism is a piece of vanity; it must always take you into its confidence; it is uneasy, troublesome, searching; it can do good, but not handsomely; it is uglier, because less dignified than selfishness itself. But here,' he goes on, with that careful candour which he so often has, 'here I perhaps exaggerate to myself, because I am the one more than the other, and feel it like a hook in my mouth at every step I take. *'Do what I will, this seems to spoil all.'* This, as it seems to me, describes him so exactly that, if you allow for histrionics

(no inconsiderable thing, remember!), you need no more description. It was said of him, once, that when he wrote of anything, he wrote with such an implacable lucidity as left it beggared of mystery. This is what he has done in this passage; and who runs may read him in it as he was.' . . .

Further on in his paper Mr. Henley recalls some of the nicknames applied by him and other friends to Stevenson. One of these 'came from Parliament House':

'Here,' quoth the jolly creature who invented it (he was afterwards, and perhaps still is, a sheriff-substitute somewhere or other)—'here comes the Gifted Boy.' Thus, and not otherwise, Peter Robertson took on, as they say, 'Peveril of the Peak,' and was instantly retorted upon as 'Peter of the Painch.' In Stevenson's case there was no response. The nickname troubled him for a moment; but he had nothing to say to it. In truth, he loved not to be thus attacked, and was in such cases sometimes at a loss for words. He shone in debate, and he excelled in talk. But in both talk and debate he was strung to his highest pitch—alert, daring, of an inextinguishable gaiety, quick and resourceful to the n^{th} degree; and to try a fall with him then was to get badly handled, if not utterly suppressed. But he was not averse from monologue—far from it; and I have sometimes thought that he ran his temperament too hard.[1] Also, was he what the world calls 'a wit'? I do not think he was. After all, a wit is a man of phrases: consciously, sometimes, he waits, he thinks, he condenses his thought, and out comes his witticism; or he waits not, nor thinks, nor condenses, but says something, and by no sort of effort he retorts in the only possible way. Mr. Thackeray has noted the difference between old Mr. Congreve, inventing his epigrams in a corner, and young Mr. Harry Fielding, who pours out everything he has in his heart,

[1] I mean that, on occasion, he would play the fool (none ever did it better), when his audience was tired of laughter. Then he became a buffoon, and a buffoon to whom you could not show the door. At these times, I think, he got down to hysteria. In any case his temperament was amazingly fresh, vigorous, and assertive: and to have him in the house 'When doleful Dumps his heart did wound, And griping Griefs,' etc., was no light infliction.

and is, in effect, as brilliant, as engaging, and as arresting a talker as Colonel Esmond has known. In print Stevenson was now and then witty enough for seven; but in talk his way was, not Congreve's but, Harry Fielding's. No; he was certainly not a wit, in the sense that Congreve was a wit. Perhaps he was nearer than he knew to that Jack Fletcher—(he talked comedies, his printer says)—for whom, having begun his later life, and being somewhat stricken with respectability, he could find no better description to me than 'a dirty dog'; perhaps (of the Samoan Stevenson I will say at once that I do not for one moment think so) he would have relished Fielding, and found himself, so to speak, in that most gallant, cheerful practical-artist soul. But Fielding and Fletcher certainly, and Congreve probably, would have had a retort, or courteous or the other thing, for the author of that rather marking phrase—'The Gifted Boy.' And Stevenson, who was not a wit, but something a thousand times better, had none. No 'Peter of the Painch' occurred to this new Peveril of the Peak; and that was Lewis's way. Give him all that Mrs. Battle asked, and he was almost inimitable. Come to him suddenly: 'prop him on the nose,' as it were: and he was tame. And so much now for that far-glancing, variously coloured, intensely romantic and flagrantly humourous expression of life—the talk of R. L. S. . . .

Lewis the musician, too—how much I saw of him! how often have I ministered to his artless and homely needs! Like his cousin, Stevenson had no ear for intervals: his one tune for many years was 'Auld Lang Syne,' which he sang, in the belief that it was a genuine Scots melody, to all manner of verses, decent sometimes, improvised or recalled as occasion or inspiration served.[1] Yet had he an aery and delicate sense of rhythm; and I have ever regretted that he did not study music from the first. Not, of course, for creation's sake; for at the best he could never have been anything but what his cousin used to call a Mus. Doc.—a plodder equally uninspired, uninteresting, and superfluous: not, I say, for music's sake, but for that of his own vigilant, inquiring, far-wandering, extremely technical mind,

[1] A special favourite (on the tin whistle) was the melody of 'The Thorn'; but in this case he was overcome by the humour of the words. Had he—had we—but known that they are the work of Robert Burns!

which might often and for long spaces of time have found in Bach and Beethoven, or even in Purcell and Lulli and Couperin, the refreshment it had to seek, and did, in Xavier de Montépin and Fortuné du Boisgobey.

I have said nothing of Stevenson the artist. . . . To tell the truth, his books are none of mine: I mean, that if I want reading, I do not go for it to the 'Edinburgh Edition.' I am not interested in remarks about morals; in and out of letters I have lived a full and varied life, and my opinions are my own. So, if I crave the enchantment of romance, I ask it of bigger men than he, and of bigger books than his: of 'Esmond' (say) and 'Great Expectations,' of 'Redgauntlet' and 'Old Mortality,' of 'la Reine Margot' and 'Bragelonne,' of 'David Copperfield' and 'A Tale of Two Cities': while, if good writing and some other things be in my appetite, are there not always Hazlitt and Lamb—to say nothing of that 'globe of miraculous continents' which is known to us as Shakespeare? There is his style, you will say; and it is a fact that it is rare, and in the last times better, because much simpler, than in the first. But after all, his style is so perfectly achieved that the achievement gets obvious: and when achievement gets obvious, is it not by way of becoming uninteresting? And is there not something to be said for the person who wrote that Stevenson always reminded him of a young man dressed the best he ever saw for the Burlington Arcade? Stevenson's work in letters does not now take me much, and I decline to enter on the question of its immortality; since that, despite what any can say, will get itself settled, soon or late, for all time. No; when I care to think of Stevenson it is not of 'R. L. S.': R. L. S. 'the renowned, the accomplished, Executing his difficult solo': but of the 'Lewis' that I knew, and loved, and wrought for, and worked with for so long. The successful man of letters does not greatly interest me: I read his careful prayers, and pass on, with the certainty that, well as they read, they were not written for print; I learn of his nameless prodigalities—and recall some instances of conduct in another vein. I remember, rather, the unmarried and irresponsible Lewis: the friend, the comrade, the *charmeur*. Truly, that last word, French as it is, is the only one that is worthy of him. I shall ever remember him as that. The

impression of his writings disappears; the impression of himself and his talk is ever a possession. . . . Forasmuch as he was primarily a talker, his printed works, like those of others after his kind, are but a sop for posterity:—'A last dying speech and confession (as it were) to show that not for nothing were they held rare fellows in their day.'

A last word. I have everywhere read that we must praise him now and always for that, being a stricken man, he would live out his life. Are we not all stricken men, and do we not all do that? And why, because he wrote better than any one, should he have praise and fame for doing that which many a poor, consumptive sempstress does; cheerfully, faithfully, with no eloquent appeals to God, nor so much as a paragraph in the evening papers? That a man writes well at death's door is sure no reason for making him a hero; for, after all, there is as much virtue in making a shirt, or finishing a gross of match-boxes, in the very act of mortality, as there is in polishing a verse, or completing a chapter in a novel. As much, I say; but is there not an immense deal more? In the one case, the sufferer does the thing he loves best in life. In the other, well—who that has not made shirts, or finished match-boxes, shall speak? Stevenson, for all his vocalisings, was a brave man, with a fine, buoyant spirit; and he took the mystery of life and time and death as seemed best to him. But we are mortals all; and, so far as I have seen, there are few of us but strive to keep a decent face for the Arch-Discomforter. There is no wonder that Stevenson wrote his best in the shadow of the Shade; for writing his best was very life to him. Why, then, all this crawling astonishment—this voluble admiration? If it meant anything, it would mean that we have forgotten how to live, and that none of us is prepared to die; and that were an outrage on the innumerable unstoried martyrdoms of humanity. Let this be said of him, once for all: 'He was a good man, good at many things, and now this also he has attained to, to be at rest.' That covers Sophocles and Shakespeare, Marlborough and Bonaparte. Let it serve for Stevenson; and, for ourselves, let us live and die uninsulted, as we lived and died before his books began to sell and his personality was a marketable thing.

Stevenson was one of the thinnest persons I ever met, fragile-looking and effeminate in appearance, with long black hair coming down to his shoulders, a face that in repose gave one the impression of weariness and discontent, while the mouth was perhaps suggestive of a vindictive temper if roused. But the face—and it was a very clever face—when lighted up by smiles could be very attractive, though it often betrayed a consciousness that he was playing down to the level of his audience, and that he wished his audience to recognise the fact.—SIR BERRY CUSACK-SMITH in the *British Weekly*, October 20, 1898.

One of the thinnest.

This peculiarly American description of Stevenson's personal appearance was printed anonymously in the New York *Sun* in 1887:

Robert Louis Stevenson, the author, really does look like the water-melon portrait of him in one of the magazines. He sat in a Long Branch car on Tuesday on his way from Manasquan to New York.

He has a long, narrow face, and wears his long brown hair parted in the middle and combed back. . . . Stevenson sat in a forward corner of the car, with his hat off, and the cape of his coat up behind his head like a monk's cowl. His black velvet coat and vest showed plainly, and over his legs he wore a black and white checked shawl. His Byronic collar was soft and untidy, and his shirt was unlaundered, but his clothes were scrupulously clean. On the long, thin, white fingers of his left hand he wore two rings, and he kept these fingers busy constantly pulling his drooping moustache. His face is slightly freckled and a little hollow at the cheek, but it has a good bit of Scotch colour in it.

In a New York street car.

Mr. Stevenson presented such an odd figure that all in the car stared at him, particularly when a rumour of who he was ran among the people. But he seemed unconscious of the interest he aroused. He was reading a book, and every now and then he would fix a sentence in his mind, close the book on one finger, look at the ceiling and muse. When a sentence

pleased him he smiled at it, and then read it again. At the Jersey City depôt he threw off his shawl and stood up, and then the figure he cut was extraordinary, for his coat proved to be merely a large cape, with a small one above it, and under both came his extra long legs, or, rather, his long lavender trousers, for they appeared to have no legs within them.

'One Who Knew Him' wrote as follows to the *Westminster Budget* a few days after the announcement of his death:

Stevenson was Stevenson, and there one is inclined to leave it, in despair of saying more. He was 'all for *Heiterkeit*,' brilliant, gay, buoyant, witty, though worn with illness, and, as his friends thought, in the shadow of death. All the world knows his portraits, and in feature and face he closely resembles the best of them; but no portrait ever gave the light and shade, the infinitely noble expression of his face, the tall, slim figure, all wires and springs. He was all action; and like a Southerner, or the Celt which he discovered in himself, he talked with his whole body. Now he would be balancing himself on the edge of the fender with his back to the fire, the next moment across the room and poised on the corner of the table, in hot chase of some brilliant fancy.

'Talked with his whole body.'

A rare story-teller in all kinds, he especially delighted in ghost stories, told them with immense solemnity, and, I think, firmly believed in many of them. His flashing brown eyes, long black hair and velvet coat specially suited him to this part. He talked as he wrote, with a fine instinct for the *bizarre* and the curious, but as his conversation was without the elaboration of his writing, so it gained something in *finesse* and dash. He was a part, not only of all he had written, but of all he had read, and to listen to him was to gain some hint of his secret. Shakespeare, Meredith, Montaigne, he not only read but absorbed; the Bible he always declared to be the best of all books. The literary reminiscence was not hunted up to fill the place, but came at call, and his felicity in the use of it was as apt when he talked as when he wrote.

Added to all this was a delightful gay humour, a sort of coyness and archness which reminds me of nothing so much as Miss Grant in his own 'Catriona.' Indeed, I seem to see more of the real Stevenson in that lady than in any male character in his books. His was just that quality of wit, that fine manner and great gentleness under a surface of polished raillery. For there was about him an extraordinary kindness and tenderness. No man was so deferential, so encouraging, so much interested in the homely affairs of another. His compliments were things to remember for a lifetime, so deftly were they conveyed and so charmingly turned. Mr. Stevenson's return from exile had been one of the things to look forward to in life, and though at times it seemed remote, all his friends had cherished the idea.

The Delight of his Talk.

All comment on the Stevenson letters made by the near friends of the author centred, sooner or later, in the statement that they were, though incomparable as letters, no better than his talk; that they, indeed, represented just his talk. And when we are told that that talk was the delight of his intimates, we can believe it without difficulty. It might, in fact, be said that, among the thinking, the sum of the effect produced by these letters, and their chief value, was to draw attention to how very good a thing good talk is, and also to bring about a realisation of how rare, in our English-speaking world, such talk is getting to be. If Mr. Stevenson had been a Frenchman, and if the public to which his letters were ultimately given had been French, the discovery, by that public, that he was wont so spontaneously to pour himself forth in his friendships, reserving himself so little, touching so fearlessly upon all things of life that are near the quick, would probably have caused little surprise. But with the appreciation of the English-reading world, a certain surprise has undoubtedly been mingled. We have had other letters of eminent writers given to us in recent years, but they contained no intimations of an ability or a willingness to communicate thought on all subjects, personal or universal, with anything approaching Mr. Stevenson's abundance.—From 'The Point of View' in *Scribner's Magazine.*

The title of an article—'The Author of "Dr. Jekyll"'—which appeared in the New York *Bookbuyer*, March 1888, indicated how R. L. S. was regarded at that time in America. The contribution in question was initialed 'H.,' and contains several passages of value, since the writer was apparently on terms of some intimacy with his subject:

A Fireside Impression.

Fortunately for the fancy of his readers, Mr. Stevenson bears the test of personal contact with something more than success; he interprets his work and gives new ground for impressions already formed. Slender in person, nervous in movement, his face is singularly sensitive to emotion and thought. His manner is gracious and free, without either self-consciousness or the affectation of indifference to the interest which brings people to him. Standing before the open fire in the quaint, low room of the old house in which he is passing the winter, he delights his visitor by the freshness and charm of his manner and talk. He speaks not with his lips only, often the usual Anglo-Saxon manner, but with his whole person. His large luminous eyes suggest the depths of experience and thought out of which his psychological romances and studies have issued, and his constant changes of attitude, as he loses himself in the conversation, disclose the dominance of the mind over the physique. His thought is made more eloquent by this unconscious sympathy of the whole person.

Mr. Stevenson's talk is very like his writing; it is fresh, racy, redolent of the soil out of which he has grown. His phrases have not been worn smooth by use; they are full of sharp outlines. To recall his own characteristic description of a talker of his acquaintance, 'he must have worn the words next to his skin and slept with them.' He sees everything from his own point of view, and puts his case, not dogmatically, but pictorially, graphically, with pith and force of a perfectly direct and sincere nature. As he talks, one of those quaint and racy essays in 'Memories and Portraits' seems to be precipitating itself; observation, comment, criticism, keen perception of character and fact long held in the solution of thought, swiftly

crystallise into memorable phrase. Mr. Stevenson does not indulge in monologue; he can supply his own cues, but he is quite ready to take them from others, and he touches subject after subject lightly, effectively, with a brilliant distinctness, both of perception and impression. So active is his mind, so alert his imagination, that he needs but a hint, and your tentative inquiry draws forth a series of observations full of pith and graphic force. There is nothing commonplace in Mr. Stevenson; he uses none of the well-worn conventions, fences himself with none of the customary reserves. He gives himself as readily in his speech as in his books; he scorns to do less, and he could not do more.

Such a man is well worth hearing discourse at ease before his fire. Without, the snow lies deep on the hills, and the river runs dark among its spruces and firs, to lose itself in the hollow of the mountains. A few books are scattered about, the companions of a man who evidently reads into books as well as through them. Above all, the man himself holds you by his simple earnestness and the fresh and penetrating charm of his quality; a something purely individual and temperamental. You rejoice in his apparent vigour, in the nervous force of his attitude and voice, in the clear health of his wonderful eye, in the promise of years of life and work that are in him.

To the *Academy*, December 19, 1896, 'W. M.' contributed an article styled 'R. L. S.: An Anniversary Chapter.' The initials, of course, were those of Mr. Wilfrid Meynell, from whose recollections this memory portrait of Stevenson is taken:

A Memory Portrait.

Many are the portraits of Mr. Stevenson, but I must say at once that in a very few of these—and the portrait of Mr. Richmond's at the National Portrait Gallery, reproduced as our supplement, is not among them—do I recognise Stevenson as I knew him. True, Mr. Strang is at one with Mr. Richmond, and indeed with some of the photographs, in giving us this fixed, plethoric version of a face which, as I saw it, was buoyant and lightly carried off, despite its large bones and its angularity. The

portraits by his friend Mr. Sargent are more the man to me, though I remember exclaiming 'Queer!' when I first saw the picture in which Stevenson walks the room with a cigarette —a picture now hanging over the dining-room mantelpiece at Vailima. No doubt Stevenson was a restless sitter, as Mr. Sargent indicates by painting him in the act of walking. Eager above all and in everything, he was not a man to repose or to pose. Signor Nerli, an Italian artist, who painted him at Vailima in the autumn of 1892, must have found that; but Stevenson worked off some of his restlessness by writing doggerel as he sat:

> Did ever mortal man hear tell o' sae singular a ferlie
> As the coming to Apia here of the painter Mr. Nerli?
>
> He cam'; and O, for a' human friends o' a' he was the pearlie—
> The pearl o' a' the painter folk was surely Mr. Nerli.
>
> He took a thraw to paint mysel'; he painted late and early;
> O wow! the many a yawn I 've yawned in the beard o' Mr. Nerli.
>
> Whiles I would sleep an' whiles would wake, an' whiles was mair than surly,
> I wondered sair as I sat there forment the eyes o' Nerli,
>
> "O will he paint me the way I want, as bonny as a girlie?
> Or will he paint me an ugly tyke?—an' be damned to Mr. Nerli!"
>
> But still an' on whichever it be he is a canty kerlie.
> The Lord protect the back an' neck o' honest Mr. Nerli.'

What struck me at once on seeing Stevenson, was that the eyes were singularly far apart for so narrow a head. But it is not the structure of his face that is most in my memory when I think of the afternoon when I first met him in 1884. It was the mobility of his features, the volatility of his whole bearing. 'Valiant in velvet' he was that afternoon, as he sat on the arm of a chair in the Savile Club smoking-room, and read out a set of verses of which I have not a word to keep, so much was my mind drawn into my eyes. If artists fail to bring back that face, perhaps literature will supply it. What report does he himself make? Readers of 'The Epilogue to An Inland Voyage' will recall the charming chapter on the author's capture and imprisonment by the civic vigilance of Châtillon-

sur-Loire. He owed, he says, his disastrous luck to his appearance: 'His face is not, like those of happier mortals, a certificate. For years he could not pass a frontier or visit a bank without suspicion.' That is for laughter. Not so is the amazing sketch of Mr. Henley.[1]

Was there ever such an inventory of a man? That unspeakable slightness we must conclude is unpaintable too, since that is the very quality some of these portraits lack. Not that Stevenson changed; for 'M. R.,' one of the last visitors to see him in Samoa, says:

'He was almost a skeleton, and wasted to a mere shadow, like a dead leaf. His hands were, indeed, scarcely wider than their framework; his limbs were painfully thin; he seemed light enough to lift with one finger; a blow would have killed him.'

This witness passed Stevenson on the road at first without recognition. 'So different,' he too says, 'was the man from his portraits.' And yet a likeness was there, and the visitor awoke suddenly to the recognition of 'this thin, brown ghost, in peaked hat and white clothes.' Speech followed, and then he recognised also 'the infinite charm of manner, half virile, half feminine,' a true touch. 'His eyes,' adds this writer, 'were soft and luminous, and so shone out through that thin, dark mask of a face, that for a little while I could discern nothing else but their beauty.' Then there are the words of Mrs. Van Rensselaer, who found Stevenson ill, in 1888, in a dismal room of a dismal New York hotel. She saw 'sensitiveness and refinement of a virile sort in the general cast of the face and head, sagacity in the long but not prominent nose, and poetic feeling in the contour of the brow.' That was in view of the profile. Of the full view she says: 'The upper part was deer-like in its gentle serenity, but the lower part was almost fox-like in its keen alertness; and the mobility of the mouth hardly seemed to fit with the intentness of the wide dark eyes.' That is recognisable; so is the word 'eager' which this lady well applies to the appearance as much as to the manner of Stevenson, even when bed-ridden. Eager is the word, she says, which remains with her. And what is that but to say that he was still upon the

[1] *See* 'Apparition,' page 132 of this volume.

road?—making tracks, as of old, in all that he did; dying at the last with more haste than Emily Brontë died: eager and glad to be gone—even on his last flitting.

Mr. Charles D. Lanier wrote of Stevenson as follows in the American *Review of Reviews*, February 1895:

Traits of Character.

He was an out-and-out gipsy in temperament. A Scotchman to the backbone, he was a South Sea Islander much more than skin deep, a good deal of a cowboy, and quite half a Frenchman. The Romany spirit was always with him. In person Stevenson was 'unspeakably slight,' thin chested, yet of agile and pleasing figure, with a massive head, fullish lips, bordered by a moustache and small imperial, and large, full, dark brown eyes, whose glowing eagerness, though seen only in a poor picture, can never be forgotten. His fingers were singularly long, taper, and expressive. His dark hair was generally quite long, though this was less an artistic affectation than an added defence against cold. So curiously sensitive was he to atmospheric influences that sometimes he would have a trifle clipped from this mane each day, until the desired contour was attained—fearing that a too sudden shearing might bring on an illness. He could not permit the approach of a person who was under the influence of a very trifling 'cold in the head'—so delicately did his physical nature respond to the most subtle impressions.

He was a confirmed smoker, and in 'Virginibus' he pronounces a reasonable acquaintance with the weed to be one of the essential attributes of a husband. You may be sure that whatever hardships he imposes on his marooned sailors, he has not the heart to sail the ship away without leaving a handsome supply of tobacco on the desert island. The good things of this world in general he had the acutest sympathy for, though his illness shut him from them through the latter part of his life. This constantly recurring weakness kept him from nearly all the out-of-door activities in which he would have delighted to join. His openly expressed ideal was to be a man of action, for whom literature should be a solace, a luxury and a means of giving pleasure to others. But this was doubtless a mere hobby,

born of his frequent helplessness; it is inconceivable that the artist in the man should not have always dominated him.

Perhaps no one was ever quicker to make deep friends when the true metal was found, or surer to grapple them 'with hooks of steel.' A witty, ever-ready talker, a charmingly responsive listener, he was the best of company, even when he was in his bed-prison. His eager vivacity seemed to show no abatement save in the total eclipses of health. From Apia to Saranac Lake, from the Sierra Nevada to Skerryvore Light, he left here and there, in his nomadic wake, devoted hearts that had become irresistibly fascinated by this bright, graceful humanist and artist, who was dying.

Several of these life-long friendships were sealed many years before there was any actual meeting. So completely did the romancer reveal himself in his books that, apart from the strong attraction which grew between him and his editors through constant correspondence, other admirers appeared whom he had never even heard of, to offer their sympathy and active aid when his struggle for life was at its height.

Dr. W. Robertson Nicoll wrote a short paper on Stevenson's personal and literary characteristics in the *Bookman*, October 1901 (reprinted in 'The Bookman Booklet' on R. L. S., 1902), from which these paragraphs are culled:

'The Bravest of Men.'

He was simply the bravest of men. Now and then, as in his letter to George Meredith, he lets us see under what disabling conditions he fought his battle. Human beings in a world like this are naturally drawn to one who suffers, and will not let himself be mastered or corrupted by suffering. They do not care for the prosperous, dominant, athletic, rich, and long-lived man. They may conjecture, indeed, that behind all the bravery there is much hidden pain, but if it is not revealed to them they cannot be sure. They love Charles Lamb for the manner in which he went through his trial, and they love him none the less because he was sometimes overborne, because on occasions he stumbled and fell. Charlotte Brontë was an example of fortitude as remarkable as Stevenson, but she was not brave after the

same manner. She allowed the clouds to thicken over her life and make it grey. Stevenson sometimes found himself in the dust, but he recovered and rose up to speak fresh words of cheer. He took thankfully and eagerly whatever life had to offer him in the way of affection, of kindness, of admiration. Nor did he ever in any trouble lose his belief that the Heart of things was kind. In the face of all obstacles he went steadily on with his work, nor did he ever allow himself to fall below the best that he could do. An example so touching, so rare, so admirable, is a reinforcement which weary humanity cannot spare.

With these qualities, and, indeed, as their natural result, Stevenson had a rare courtesy. He was, in the words of the old Hebrew song, 'lovely and pleasant,' or rather, as Robertson Smith translated it, 'lovely and winsome,' in all his bearings to men of all kinds, so long as they did not fall under the condemnation of his moral judgment. With a personality so rich, Stevenson had the power of communicating himself. He could reveal his personality without egotism, without offence. Many writers of charming individuality cannot show themselves in their books. There is as little of themselves in their novels as there would be in a treatise on mathematics, if they could write it. Perhaps less. There have been mathematicians like Augustus de Morgan, who could put humour and personality into a book on geometry.

In his essay on the 'Life' of Stevenson which Mr. Gilbert K. Chesterton contributed to the *Daily News* of 18th October 1901, that critic wrote:

'Enormous Capacity for Joy.'

Such a statement, for example, as the statement that Stevenson was a 'faddling hedonist,' ought to have aroused any friend of Stevenson's to an access of the most creditable bad temper. To say that Stevenson was a 'faddling hedonist' is like saying that Schopenhauer was a cheap optimist, or that Mr. Keir Hardie is weighed down by a superstitious reverence for the powers that be. Let us consider for a moment what were the facts.

A certain human being, no matter who, was so heavily stricken with a deadly danger of the lungs that he had to lie in bed day

and night, and was permitted neither to move nor to speak. On the top of this his right arm was put into a sling to prevent hæmorrhage. When the joys of this condition were but half exhausted, it was discovered that his eyesight was endangered by ophthalmia from the dust, and he was consequently condemned in addition to lie in complete darkness. In this state of things his 'faddling hedonism' led him to compose the greater part of 'A Child's Garden of Verses.' Out of that horrible darkness and silence and immobility comes a voice that says:

> 'The world is so full of a number of things,
> I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.'

To read of such a thing is like hearing a corpse speak suddenly of birds and sunshine. It is the sublimest testimony to creation that the Creator himself could ask, the testimony of one who had lost all. Let any one who thinks little of it smash his own lungs, disable his own arm, gag his own mouth, blind his own eyes, and then resign himself with a self-indulgent gaiety to being a faddling hedonist. Is it possible that even the sevenfold stupidity of the critical spirit does not see that gaiety was valuable to Stevenson precisely because it is the most difficult of all the virtues? As most men have triumphantly maintained some level of sobriety he triumphantly maintained a level of exhilaration. 'He discovered the new asceticism of cheerfulness, which will prove a hundred times harder than the old asceticism of despair. It is an idle thing, comparatively speaking, to remind the world that, gay as Stevenson was, he was only a Puritan in fancy dress. It is futile to say that, although he was hilarious, he was serious. For, as a matter of fact, no man can be merry unless he is serious. Happiness is as grave and practical as sorrow, if not more so. We might as well imagine that a man could carve a cardboard chicken or live on imitation loaves of bread, as suppose that any man could get happiness out of things that are merely light or laughable. The really frivolous man, not unknown in fashionable circles, is the man who is too frivolous to enjoy himself. Stevenson's enormous capacity for joy flowed directly out of his profoundly religious temperament. He conceived himself as an unimportant guest at one eternal and uproarious banquet, and, instead of grumbling at the soup,

he accepted it with that careless gratitude which marks the baby and the real man of the world. He rode on the great galloping gift-horse of existence, with the joy of a horseman at once dexterous and reckless, and did not, like so many more ambitious philosophers, nearly fall off in his desperate efforts to look the gift-horse in the mouth. His gaiety was neither the gaiety of the Pagan nor the gaiety of the bon vivant. It was the greater gaiety of the mystic. He could enjoy trifles, because to him there was no such thing as a trifle. He was a child who respected his dolls because they were the images of the image of God, portraits at only two removes. He was a boy who thought his fireworks were as splendid as the stars, but it was only because he thought the stars were as youthful and as festive as the fireworks.

Mr. Frederick Greenwood wrote as follows in the *Sphere* of December 7, 1901, his remarks being called forth by Mr. W. E. Henley's *Pall Mall Magazine* article:

'That Kobold Look.'

I am of Stevenson's admirers, and resentful of the critics (amongst whom I do not include Mr. Henley) who began to find out when Stevenson died that after all he was no considerable writer, and particularly that his style was bad. Whether they would have discovered that so readily if he had not told them of his extraordinary pains in youth to acquire a style I doubt; at the same time doubting not at all that he had a good style that was his own much more than anybody else's, and that in certain variations of this style he wrote many excellent and some deep and truly beautiful pages. For one, therefore, I am in no fear that Stevenson's reputation as a writer will be taken from him by the criticism of the day, and am in no way uneasy save when I look at his portraits. There are many of them—at least, enough. They have their variations as a matter of course, but all have the same strange stamp of something more than personal singularity. His genius was by no means of an uncommon kind. He might have been a sort of Paganini among novel writers, but he was not. So far as we are able to judge, there are thousands of Sandy Smiths and John Joneses entirely

like him in character and conduct; but the face of him in these portraits is the face of a man from another and not a superior world. It fascinates, yet not with a pleased, embracing fascination, but with a curiosity that stands off on guard while it inquires. Whether few or many others are impressed by it in the same way, of course I do not know, but to me it is the most threateningly elfish face that I have ever seen in print or paint. As I look I feel as Mr. Kipling felt when he was 'afraid,' though not in exactly the same way. Now I should like to know, as some others must, whether Stevenson had that kobold look in life, and whether more or less when young, or than appears in his pictures; and perhaps Mr. Henley or some other friend of Stevenson's will say whether he ever heard of an ancestor of his changed in the cradle, as sometimes happened with the Highland Scotch. To do so will be to satisfy a poignant but a legitimate and even a philosophical curiosity.

From an unsigned article on the 'Life' in *Blackwood's Magazine*, November 1901:

'Not a True Bohemian.'

About his school-days Mr. Stevenson was less communicative than about the period preceding his exit from the nursery, and his biographer has not been able to add very much to what is already known. He has left no lasting tradition behind him at the Edinburgh Academy, though we have heard a vague story that instead of spending his daily penny for luncheon he used to save it up, with a view to an expedition on Saturday to Leith, where the company of seafaring men was to be readily obtained. He spent only two years at that famous school, and we have it on good authority that in the printed school-list for 1862, his name appears among the 'gytes' as Stevenson, Robert, while in the list for 1863 it is rendered as Stevenson, Lewis R. This is the sort of vital fact which will be greedily seized upon by those whose amusement it is to 'thrash out' the lives of great men, and we are happy to make them a present of the information. It was certainly a strange freak, at the age of eighteen, to alter the spelling of his second name merely because he had taken a dislike to a prominent fellow-townsman who employed the ordinary Scotch mode of spelling that, his own, patronymic. What Mr. Stevenson

would have done had his baptismal names chanced to be William Ewart, we scarcely like to think. . . .

To refer to his eccentricity in dress—reassumed, after a temporary suspension, when he was old enough to know better—is to adduce sufficient proof of the predominance in him of this fatal quality. We think none the worse of a young fellow for being a bit of a dandy: it indicates an abhorrence of those slovenly habits, those 'dressing-gown and slipper-tricks,' which, if not sternly checked in youth, will assuredly obtain the mastery in middle age. But grossly to violate the ordinary conventions of dress, whether a sense of comfort or of artistic effect be made the excuse—still more to wear long hair and even *seem* to be the reverse of *soigné* in the matters which concern the adornment of the person—indicates a frame of mind which must seriously obstruct the operation of the better qualities which lie beneath. The truth is that Stevenson was not a Bohemian of the true breed. He was essentially the burgess masquerading as the Bohemian; and that was just the difference between him and his no less brilliant though less celebrated cousin, 'Bob.' How could it be otherwise, understanding his pedigree, into which even the ingenuity of antiquaries could not contrive to interpolate James Mohr? The velvet coat, the black shirt, all the other items of the panoply of eccentricity, were donned, whether in Princes Street or in Piccadilly, not as a matter of course and in the ordinary nature of things, but for the sake of being odd; with an eye on the *digito monstrari*; and by way of protest and defiance to the world which went on its own way, not much concerning itself with youthful genius and its obtrusive manifestations.

Stevenson's Handwriting.

The handwriting of Mr. Stevenson was a horror to compositors, and the anxiety of the printers was by no means abated when they succeeded in getting the proofs despatched to the novelist, as it was his not infrequent habit to signify his displeasure at any slip from accuracy in strong terms on the margin of his proof-sheets; and in the matter of punctuation he was extremely fastidious.—*Edinburgh Dispatch*, December 19, 1894.

Mr. Edmund Gosse wrote an article on 'Stevenson's Relations with Children' which appeared concurrently in *Chambers's Journal* and the *Youth's Companion* of Boston, in July 1899, and has not been reprinted in any of Mr. Gosse's books. He begins by mentioning that it was 'a terrible disappointment' to him when Mr. Swinburne confessed, after reading 'A Child's Garden of Verses' at his suggestion, that he could see nothing in it that showed any appreciation of childhood. Proceeding to discuss Stevenson's own childhood, Mr. Gosse writes:

His Relations with Children.

He was still a rather little boy when, in the summer holidays, having been reading a number of 'detective' novels of a bad kind, he was passing one Sunday afternoon along a road which led through one of the suburbs of Edinburgh, and saw a deserted house, left furnished, but without, apparently, a caretaker. It suddenly struck Stevenson that it would be a very gallant thing to break into this house. No one was in sight, and, stealing round, he found it possible to open a window at the back, and so climb in. It really was unoccupied, and he prowled from room to room, looking at the books and pictures, in a great excitement of spirit, until he heard, as he thought, a noise in the garden. This sent him immediately, in an instant collapse of courage, under a bed, and then terror seized him. He imagined himself pounced upon, charged with robbery marched home with gyves upon his wrists, and arriving just as the family were assembling to attend evening service. He burst out crying, and could not stop, and his sobs echoed in the empty house.

He crept out where he had crept in, having done no harm to anything except his little tender Scottish conscience. But the spirit of adventure, which was native to him, is exemplified in the story, and also a sort of solitude, as of a boy obliged to play by himself for want of other pirates and burglars to combine with.

The writer then goes on to mention Stevenson's visits to Mr. Gosse's home and his interest in his friend's

children, and suggests that Stevenson's interest lay chiefly in discussing the child mind with grown-up people:

About 1878, I find (continues Mr. Gosse) in looking over old letters, Stevenson telling me, 'I envy you your wife, your home, your child'; and this would be enough for a constructive biographer to build up a theory of Stevenson's domestic aspirations upon, were it not that, unfortunately, the sentence proceeds, and ends with 'your cat.' Now, Stevenson's relations to cats were absolutely cold; and if we had to argue that he loved children on the basis of this declaration, it would go ill with us. But, as all the world has been informed, he eventually married a lady who brought with her a young son by a former marriage.

I am not going to intrude on the province of Mr. Lloyd Osbourne, who is thoroughly capable of telling us what his communications with his stepfather were; but I think he will not be angry with me if I say that the new relation, almost that of a father, and quite that of a play-fellow, made an instant change in Louis Stevenson's attitude towards children. He began to see in them all variations of this intelligent and sympathetic little stepson of his own.

Mr. Gosse then refers to the curious little booklets produced by Stevenson and his stepson at Davos in 1881, and says:

It is a temptation to make some extracts from these diverting little books; but as I look through my own set of them for this purpose, I am bound to admit that, although they are full of fun, it is the fun of a grown-up person reflecting on his own little-childishness, and not of a child among children.

We come, therefore, to 'A Child's Garden of Verses,' which first made Stevenson known to the world as a poet and as a student of childhood. It is necessary to remind ourselves that twelve years ago Stevenson's name was not one to conjure with, as it is now. His friends were as timid as hens about this new experiment of their duckling's; they hesitated and doubted to the last. Nor was it only they who doubted. The poet himself had fearful qualms. He wrote to me about the proofs of 'A Child's Garden of Verses,' March 12, 1885: 'They look ghastly

in the cold light of print; but there is something nice in the little ragged regiment after all; the blackguards seem to me to smile, to have a kind of childish, treble note that sounds in my ears freshly; no song, if you will, but a child's voice.'

The book, therefore, was somewhat timidly published; but there was no doubt about the authenticity of the voice, and Stevenson was accepted at once as one of the rare writers of genius about childhood. . . .

He retained, in extraordinary freshness, the memory of himself as a child. Most persons have a very vague recollection of what they themselves really felt and hoped for at the age of eight; they try to reproduce their impressions, and the experience of five mingles with that of fifteen. But Stevenson had no cloudiness of memory; he knew exactly what he had gone through. 'I remember,' he said, 'as though it were yesterday, the expansion of spirit, the dignity and self-reliance that came with a pair of moustachios in burnt cork, even when there was none to see.' He himself, as we soon divined, was the child whose emotions and adventures were described in 'A Child's Garden of Verses.' . . .

To the very close of Stevenson's life, he was accustomed to make up adventures as he lay in bed very still, forbidden to speak or move, propped up on pillows, with the world of fancy before him. He had retained a great deal of the temperament of a child, and it was his philosophy to encourage it. In his dreary passages of bed, when his illness was more than commonly heavy upon him, he used to contrive little amusements for himself. He played on the flute, or he modelled little figures and groups in clay. But he could not always be doing this; and when his fingers were tired he lay gazing down on the white world which covered him, and imagined that armies were marching over the hills of his knees, or ships coming to anchor between the blanket and the sheet.

Mr. Gosse arrives at the conclusion that:

In the years I knew him, if Stevenson expressed much interest in children, it was mainly for the sake of their fathers and mothers; but after a while he began to take a very great delight in summoning back to his clear recollection the panic

fears and adventurous pleasures of his own early youth, thus becoming, in his portraiture of himself, the consummate painter of one species of child. But his relation to other children was shy and gently defiant: it would have exhausted him to play with them; but he looked forward to a time when they should be old enough to talk to him.

Mr. J. Cuthbert Hadden, the well-known Scots *littérateur* and musician, whose home, 'Allermuir,' on the Braid Hills, looks across the vale to the hill of that name beloved of Stevenson, contributed to the *Glasgow Herald*, April 21, 1900, a study of Stevenson from a musician's view-point, under the title of 'R. L. S. and Music.' The paper is reprinted here with the exception of the opening paragraph:

His Love of Music.

That he was musical at all will probably be regarded as a revelation to most people; and indeed it is only since the recent publication of his correspondence that even the elect have realised the full extent of his musical tastes and accomplishments. That he took at least a mild interest in music might have been inferred from various allusions to the art in his tales and essays. In 'The Wrong Box,' for example, we have the humorous situation where the young barrister pretends that he is engaged on the composition of an imaginary comic opera. It is in the same story, again, that there occurs a veritable 'locus classicus' on the art of playing the penny whistle, and the difference between the amateur and the professional performer. Stevenson, as we shall see, was himself devoted to the penny whistle, and in view of that devotion it is curious to remark the observation in this story that one seldom, if ever, encounters a person learning to play that instrument. 'The young of the penny whistler,' as he puts it, 'like those of the salmon, are occult from observation.' He endows David, his forebear at Pilrig, with the musical ear, for the Laird received David Balfour 'in the midst of learned works and musical instruments, for he was not only a deep philosopher, but much of a musician.'

It is, however, needless to dwell upon these vague impersonal

references to music when so much that is directly explicit on the subject is to be found both in the Vailima letters and in the later correspondence. Miss Blantyre Simpson, who knew Stevenson in his early days, says that he had not much of a musical ear, and had only a 'rudimentary acquaintance' with 'Auld Lang Syne' and 'The Wearing of the Green.' It is clear that he improved as the years went on, but his family seem always to have regarded his musical accomplishments with something like scorn. In 1874, when he was twenty-four, he was at Chester with his father, and the verger was taking the visitors round the cathedral.

'We got into a little side chapel, whence we could hear the choir children at practice, and I stopped a moment listening to them with, I dare say, a very bright face, for the sound was delightful to me. Ah," says he (the verger), "you're very fond of music." I said I was. "Yes, I could tell that by your head," he answered. Then my father cut in brutally, said anyway I had no ear, and left the verger so distressed and shaken in the foundation of his creed that, I hear, he got my father aside afterwards and said he was sure there was something in my face, and wanted to know what it was if not music.'

The elder Stevenson very likely failed to distinguish between the love of music and the possession of an ear for music. The two things are totally different, as Coleridge once pointed out in regard to his own particular case. 'I have,' he said, 'no ear whatever, I could not sing an air to save my life, but I have the intensest delight in music, and can detect good from bad.' Stevenson probably had no such gift of discrimination, but that he had at least the faculty of musical appreciativeness seems perfectly clear. He mentions it as one of his characteristic failings that he never could remember the name of an air, no matter how familiar it was to him; but he was able to say of some engrossing pursuit that it 'fascinates me like a tune.' Wealth, he remarked once, evidently in all seriousness, is 'useful for only two things—a yacht and a string quartette.' In his younger days he seems to have been as much devoted to the opera as ever De Quincey was. At Frankfort, in 1872, he reports that he goes to the theatre every night, except when there is no opera. One night he was 'terribly excited' over

Halévy's 'La Juive,' so much so indeed that he had to 'slope' in the middle of the fifth act. It was raining and cold outside, so he went into a 'Bierhalle' and brooded for nearly an hour over his glass. 'An opera,' he mused, 'is far more real than real life to me. It seems as if a stage illusion, and particularly this hardest to swallow and most conventional illusion of them all—an opera—would never stale upon me. I wish that life was an opera. I should like to live in one; but I don't know in what quarter of the globe I shall find a society so constituted. Besides, it would soon pall—imagine asking for three-kreuzer cigars in recitative, or giving the washerwoman the inventory of your dirty clothes in a sustained and flourished aria!' Here, as some one has remarked, we see the wide-eyed innocence of the man—the tinsel and the humbug so apparent, and yet the vague longing so real.

That Stevenson should make attempts to play the piano was only natural, but in that accomplishment he does not seem to have proceeded very far. When he was at Bournemouth in 1886, he tells Mrs. Fleeming Jenkin that 'I write all the morning, come down, and never leave the piano till five; write letters, dine, get down again about eight, and never leave the piano until I go to bed.' At this time the whistle was Osbourne's instrument. 'You should hear Lloyd on the penny whistle and me on the piano!' Stevenson exclaimed to his father, 'Dear powers, what a concerto! I now live entirely for the piano; he for the whistle; the neighbours in a radius of a furlong and a half are packing up in quest of better climes.' By his own confession, it was a case of picking out the melody with one finger! In the matter of musical arrangement he proclaimed himself a purist, and yet, with charming inconsistency, announces that he is arranging certain numbers of the 'Magic Flute' for 'two melodious forefingers.' Clearly, it does not say much for Mr. Henley's powers as a virtuoso that Stevenson should have 'counterfeited his playing on the piano.'

But Stevenson's particular instrument was the flageolet, the same that Johnson once bought. Miss Simpson says that his flageolet-playing was merely one of his impulsive whims, an experiment undertaken to see if he liked making music. However this may have been, there can be no doubt about his

assiduity in practice; indeed, the earlier Vailima letters are full of references which show his devotion to the now somewhat despised instrument. 'Played on my pipe,' 'took to tootling on the flageolet,' are entries which constantly occur, the context always making it clear that 'pipe' is synonymous with flageolet. 'If I take to my pipe,' he writes on one occasion, 'I know myself all is over for the morning.' Writing to Mr. Colvin in June 1891, he says:—'Tell Mrs. S. I have been playing "Le Chant d'Amour" lately, and have arranged it, after awful trouble, rather prettily for two pipes; and it brought her before me with an effect scarce short of hallucination. I could hear her voice in every note; yet I had forgot the air entirely, and began to pipe it from notes as something new, when I was brought up with a round turn by this reminiscence.' Generally speaking, Stevenson 'tootled' by himself; but now and again he took part in concerted music with Osbourne and Mrs. Strong. One day he makes music 'furiously' with these two. A day or two later he writes:—'Woke at the usual time, very little work, for I was tired, and had a job for the evening—to write parts for a new instrument, a violin. Lunch, chat, and up to my place to practise; but there was no practising for me—my flageolet was gone wrong, and I had to take it all to pieces, clean it, and put it up again. As this is a most intricate job—the thing dissolves into seventeen separate members; most of these have to be fitted on their individual springs as fine as needles, and sometimes two at once with the springs shoving different ways—it took me till two.' However, he got over his difficulty, and was ready for the performance. 'In the evening our violinist arrived, no great virtuoso truly, but plucky, industrious, and a good reader; and we played five pieces with huge amusement, and broke up at nine.' It goes without saying that, notwithstanding all this practice, Stevenson was exceedingly modest about his accomplishments. 'Even my clumsinesses are my joy,' he said, 'my woodcuts, my stumbling on the pipe.'

But we must not forget the penny whistle. That instrument seems to have at one time quite ousted the flageolet. 'I am a great performer before the Lord on the penny whistle,' he writes to Miss Boodle from Saranac in 1888. 'We now perform duets on two D tin whistles; it is no joke to make the bass; I think

I must really send you one, which I wish you would correct. I may be said to live for these instrumental labours now; but I have always some childishness on hand.' To play a bass of any kind on a tin whistle must indeed have been 'no joke.' But the instrument appears to have had quite a fascination for Stevenson at the time. He even proposed to associate it with the title of what he ultimately called 'A Child's Garden of Verses.' When he sent the manuscript for publication he could not decide about the title, but after some banter on the subject, he tentatively fixed on 'The Penny Whistle: Nursery Verses, etc.' Then he thought of a variation—'Penny Whistles for Small Whistlers,' and directed that the title-page should be embellished with crossed penny whistles, 'or a sheaf of 'em.'

But Stevenson was more than a player of music: he actually tried his hand at composition! In one letter of the year 1886 he sets down in musical notation from memory a part of a dance air of Lully's. About the harmony, which he has evidently made himself, he talks quite learnedly. 'Where I have put an A,' he says, 'is that a dominant eleventh or what? or just a seventh on the D? and if the latter, is that allowed? It sounds very funny. Never mind all my questions; if I begin about music (which is my leading ignorance and curiosity) I have always to babble questions; all my friends know me now, and take no notice whatever.' A few months later and he had composed his Opus 1. He called it a Threnody, and he sent it for criticism to his cousin, Mr. R. A. M. Stevenson, who was better versed in the art. Some plain talk on the part of the cousin apparently followed, for we find the composer urging certain points in self-justification. 'There may be hidden fifths in it,' he says, 'and if there are it shows how damn spontaneous the thing was. I could tinker and tic-tac-toe on a piece of paper, but scorned the act with a Threnody which was poured forth like blood and water on the groaning organ.' There was the true composer, putting down his inspiration as it came to him, and allowing it to stand as it was in defiance of all rule! Nothing daunted, he made another attempt. 'Herewith another shy,' he said, 'more melancholy than before, but I think not so abjectly idiotic. The musical terms seem to be as good as in Beethoven, and that, after all, is the great affair. Bar the damn

bareness of the bass, it looks like a real piece of music from a distance. I am proud to say it was not made one hand at a time. The bass was of synchronous birth with the treble; they are of the same age, and may God have mercy on their souls.' That is too characteristically charming to be spoiled by comment.

X

STEVENSON THE ARTIST

In the following pages we have a collection of passages from the writings of literary critics touching the artistic side of Stevenson, together with extracts from ephemeral literature which are thought to throw some beams of light on Stevenson the artist.

Although the editor has endeavoured to avoid as far as possible any comment on the respective value of the articles quoted, leaving the selections to speak for themselves, he cannot refrain from expressing his admiration for the study of Stevenson's work which Mr. C. T. Copeland, Lecturer on English Literature to Harvard University, contributed to the *Atlantic Monthly*, April 1895. For sympathetic knowledge, just appreciation, insight, literary style, this essay is certainly unexcelled. Any selections from a piece of writing so deftly composed, so closely reasoned, cannot give an adequate idea of the singular merit of the whole; but the editor hopes that he may have succeeded in choosing from Mr. Copeland's article those passages which, while representative of the whole, best fit into the scheme of the present work:

Critical Estimate.

That Stevenson was gay and resolute enough to found a school of romance in the midst of opposing tendencies is, of course, the chief quality of all. He loves the past for the courageous picture of it which survives. He blows his wild war-note, unfurls his banner to the breeze of long ago, and

goes forth always to the motto, '*Esperance* and set on.' This watchword, indeed, might be set above essay as well as story, travels and verse as well as essay, for in almost all the extraordinary variety of his writing Robert Louis Stevenson is the consistent preacher of courage and cheer. The writer's own brave and most pathetic life was, as the world knows, a consistent practising of what he preached. In most of his published words, optimism is at the height of the Selkirk grace, or of Happy Thought in 'A Child's Garden of Verses':

> 'The world is so full of a number of things,
> I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.'

And never, even in 'A Christmas Sermon' or 'Pulvis et Umbra,' does he decline farther into the vale of pessimism than the stage once dubbed meliorism by a great novelist whom he did not love. . . .

Next in importance, perhaps, to the cardinal trait of Mr. Stevenson's career, that he was a romantic in an age of realism, come the facts that he was a Scotchman, born within the frown of Edinburgh Castle, and that his father and grandfather were engineers to the Board of Northern Lights. This sounds like a business connection with the Auróra Borealis, but it means merely that the lives of the Stevensons had the relish both of salvation and of adventure, because they were the builders of Skerryvore, the Bell Rock, and other great sea-lights along the northern coast of Britain. Much of the best writing of the author of 'David Balfour'—can any one forget the dedication of that book?—thrills and tingles with the feeling of race and native land. I have in mind at this moment the 'Foreigner at Home,' a page or two of the 'Silverado Squatters,' and portions of the paper entitled 'The Manse,' ending with the triumphant picture of ascent from the writer, through engineers, Picts, and what-not clans and tribes, to Probably Arboreal chattering in the top of the family tree. Less often, yet again and again, both in verse and in prose, does Stevenson dwell proudly upon the exploits and the hardy lives of his forebears, and mourn the degeneracy in bodily frame and strength of their hearth-keeping descendant. His whole feeling about all this is

in some enchanting lines written at Bournemouth, in a house named after the chief memorial of his family:—

> 'Say not of me that weakly I declined
> The labours of my sires, and fled the sea,
> The towers we founded and the lamps we
> To play at home with paper like a child.
> But rather say: *In the afternoon of time*
> *A strenuous family dusted from its hands*
> *The sand of granite, and beholding far*
> *Along the sounding coast its pyramids*
> *And tall memorials catch the dying sun,*
> *Smiled well content, and to this childish task*
> *Around the fire addressed its evening hours.*'

It never occurred to him that he was the brightest of all the lamps they lit, but many men, even of the not inhuman, would be content to see Skerryvore itself quenched in the ocean, if by that extinction the light might shine again on Pala mountain. . . .

Mr. Henry James has said, in words which none may hope to better, that Mr. Stevenson is a Scotchman of the world. So, indeed, he is; and so, without doubt, was the man as well as the writer. But this Bohemian, this gypsy, this cosmopolite, had, after all his travels—thus I have been told by one who knew him—a slight burr remaining in his speech. And he has a much stronger Doric accent of the mind. England seems to him in many ways an alien land, and the 'Foreigner at Home' is a resonant statement of differences that lie at the very root of things between the sister kingdoms. The Scot, travelling southward from his grey hills and rocks and mists, marvels—however much he may have read in books—at the rich fields, the quiet rivers, the stolid and sodden peasant, the windmills, and the chimes of bells. The accent of the people sounds pertly in his ear, just as Davie Balfour 'was amazed at the clipping tones and the odd sing-song' of 'the right English speech'; and to his eye, familiar with thick-walled houses built of stone, the thin, flat-chested edifices of England seem no more than 'rickles' of brick. The northerner may even be a householder in the south, and his door-key be burnished from long use; but still 'the house is no his ain house, he kens by the biggin' o't.'

But Mr. Stevenson is not least attractive when he is of his nation without knowing, or at least without remembering it; when not only, cosmic Scot though he he, he keeps the colour of his nativity, but also, highly secularised Calvinist though he as surely is, he unwittingly suggests the bleak pulpit of the northern kingdom. In 'Father Damien, an Open Letter,' in the 'Samoan Footnote to History,' none but the blind can fail to see a kind of religious heat of argument; and 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,' approached at the angle not of art, but of ethics, is the fascinating, hideous result of generations of pondering over the eternal problem of predestination and free will. . . .

If zest in discussion, not to say argument, is a frequent trait of Stevenson's countrymen, why, then, a good amount of buckram is equally apparent in their moral texture. It makes them stiff in judgment, and from this rigidity Stevenson himself was by no means exempt. No one, in these days, except a Scotchman or a New Englander, we must believe, could be so exquisite an artist and have at the same time so large a fund of ethical attention. The incongruity of the union in Stevenson, the like and unlike incongruity of Hawthorne, are to be explained, in the slight and tentative degree to which such mysteries can ever be shown, by the long persistence of the straiter sort of Puritanism in the two countries. Some one exclaims that I am mistaken, that Stevenson is no Puritan. Let me hasten to add that Stevenson is usually un-Scotch in his standards—although he has often expressed his admiration for frugality, and calls it somewhere the artist's armour—but that in stiff adherence to his standards he is valiantly Puritan and Scotch. Of himself he required much; the sum of his moral impost upon others appears to be that they should be brave, honest, cheerful, kind, and that, without seeking their own happiness, they should strive to bring happiness to their fellowmen. Not the *credo* of the unco' guid, this, in Scotland or anywhere else; but it is Stevenson's wherever he is. . . .

It is through Stevenson's knowledge of his country and his sympathy with its people—a quality in him which has all the fervour of a clan, all the geniality of a larger world—that his Scottish tales are his best. 'Treasure Island' for its twenty-one deaths, its buccaneers and stockade, its one most hideous

murder, and, above all, for its 'seafaring man with one leg,' I admire with my brain as an inimitably clever imitation of eminent and well-known models. The style is a little miracle of the direct and the appropriate, and as for the conduct of the fable, that might be taken as a breathing example of the Athenian's formula for oratory,—'*Action, action, action.*' But in 'Kidnapped'—alas for the inefficient title!—the imitator becomes himself a model; we step at once into an air which, if not more lively, is more alive and more authentic, and the characters, Alan and David, of course, more than any, are felt to be less symbolical and more individual. In their long flight together, the wind seems to turn the pages of that swift record, and the smell of the heather comes with it. The spirit of the nation is dominant. . . .

As the best of the fiction is of that country (Scotland), so likewise some of the shrewdest and most piquant things in the essays are born to the same native manner. 'Memories and Portraits,' by common consent the best *in toto* of the three volumes, is by subject four-fifths Scotch; 'Child's Play,' in 'Virginibus Puerisque,' is in all its origin Scotch; Scotch also in more than that sense the ingenious and eloquent plea for romance, so finely entitled the 'Lantern-Bearers.' Dost remember the minister and the dying gravedigger in 'Old Mortality'? 'The gravedigger heard him out; then he raised himself upon one elbow, and with the other hand pointed through the window to the scene of his lifelong labours. "Doctor," he said, "I hae laid three hunner and fower score in that kirkyaird; and it had been His wull," indicating Heaven, "I would hae likit weel to hae made out the fower hunner!"' Or the 'Old Scotch Gardener'? He would thank you bravely if you praised one of his plants, 'all credit in the matter falling to him. If, on the other hand, you called his attention to some back-going vegetable, he would quote Scripture: "*Paul may plant and Apollos may water*"; all blame being left to Providence, on the score of deficient rain or untimely frosts.'

Of Scotland and the north, also, was Mr. Hunter—but we must leave this too captivating part of our theme with only a final illustration, from the 'Silverado Squatters,' of how one true-born Scotchman feels when he meets another in foreign lands.

The sentiment lifts the young writer not so much into maturity of style, for that was surprisingly his already, as into that stronger and fuller tide of feeling which one encounters in general only in Stevenson's later writing. The twain, says he, may be rivals, almost foreigners, at home; but when they meet abroad, they are joined at once by 'some ready-made affection.' . . .

That Mr. Stevenson is a sworn romantic, and that he is so much a Scot as to keep a strong flavour of the wilding, in spite of each exotic graft, are truths no less conspicuous than that he is an exquisite and a secure artist in prose narrative, in verse, the essay, and the sketch. So perfectly indeed does he write that the Philistines—and not the mere *bourgeois* citizens of the country, but the first families of Philistia—are often heard to accuse him of having naught to say. To them, it is more than probable, he has nothing at all to say, unless they first master certain remarks once made by Mr. Joseph Addison on the subject of Literary Taste. But to the minds of men who have a humble and hearty admiration for good writing, Stevenson's tales of adventure gain much from his care about form; and his kind and sagacious thoughts gain very much indeed from the 'continual slight novelty' of his style. This loved and lost storyteller of ours could no more content himself with the construction used by Dumas in his gay and ragged volumes than with the disposition and English of the scene in 'Guy Mannering' which jars on him like a false note in music or colour. Yet he had read 'Le Vicomte de Bragelonne' five times, and hoped—let us trust the hope was realised—to read it once again before he died. And the jarring scene—which happens, by the way, to have been that of Harry Bertram's landing at Ellangowan—he respects as being in general 'a model instance of the romantic method.' The Meredith jargon Mr. Stevenson would no more think of putting into the mouths of his own people than he would that uttered by the purely symbolic young men and maidens whom Scott fobs off upon us as heroes and heroines. Mr. Meredith is nevertheless the breath of life to him, and Sir Walter 'out and away the king of the romantics.'

In these references to Stevenson's art and the frequent artlessness of Scott and Dumas, there is no slightest intention of

matching him with them. He would not, if he could, have written like them; he could not, if he would, have imagined and invented and swung the whole thing along as they did. They, with all their faults, are great romantics; he, with all his gifts and graces, is a little romantic; and the many well-meaning persons who range him persistently with Scott do him nothing but disservice. . . .

Sir Walter's books seem to me like a large symphony which has many discords; Mr. Stevenson's, like a discreet yet moving theme, perfectly played on fewer instruments. Perhaps we are hasty, the many of us who hold this opinion together. If Scott had died at the age when Stevenson was taken from us, the world would have lacked the 'Waverley Novels'; if a like fate had overtaken Dickens, we should not have had 'A Tale of Two Cities'; and under a similar stroke, Goldsmith could not have written 'Retaliation,' or tasted the bitter-sweet first night of 'She Stoops to Conquer.' At the age of forty-four Mr. Thomas Hardy had probably not dreamed of 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles.' But what a man has already done at forty year is likely, I am afraid, to be a gauge as well as a promise of what he will do in the future; and from Stevenson we were entitled to expect perfect form and continued variety of subject, rather than a measurable dynamic gain.

Stevenson himself, it would appear, clearly saw the limits within which his talent would best exhibit itself. He never, for a good example, attempted the historical novel, so favourite a field with most romancers. . . . And it would have been as much out of him, I think, to essay a portrait in the grand style, of some bygone king or statesman, as to flash such an Aristophanic ray as Caleb Balderstone across a tragedy in the key of the 'Bride of Lammermoor.' . . .

Several London critics, in the attempt, perhaps, to avenge certain 'bards' upon their 'reviewers,' have spoken grudgingly of his wonderful skill, because, forsooth, he learned to write before he wrote for publication. The offence was deeper dyed because the young Scot sought aid from France, the ancient ally of Scotland, and scrupled not to avow that his sojourn in Paris and the study of French writers had taught him secrets of technique. Even British critics allow a painter to study

pigments before he exhibits a picture, a sculptor to model in clay before he carves the nation's heroes in marble; but, in the face of repeated blows, the fine old superstition dies hard, that ill-regulated impulse is an important element in the 'inspiration' of an art more subtle than either painting or sculpture. Stevenson chose to reduce this element to a minimum, and to make himself the most faithful of apprentices. He became at last the most impeccable of artists; and although the ardent study of an extraordinary variety of masters did not dull his keen, original gift,—as if, indeed, the right use of even the one talent ever failed to multiply it,—he yet keeps in his most ornate pages the good tradition of the language, the classic note of the best English prose. Stevenson loves and practises the *belle phrase*, the harmonious sentence; but scarce ever does he descend to the indolent *cheville*. Never, to the best of my memory, does he make the Wegg-like change,—so often made by Wegg's creator, that great, imperfect genius,—the change from rhythm to metre. In few, he nicely observes the adjective in Dryden's saying, 'that *other* harmony of prose.'

Stevenson's prose, then, discourses eloquent music; and its diversity is no less remarkable than its eloquence. If, like the banker poet, he had elected to read only his own works, he might have found his author always entertaining by frequent recourse from one self to another. He never lacks precision, clearness, proportion,—the classic qualities; but, outside of these, the variety of his masters helped him to be various. . . .

It is not the least of his achievements that, after his death, he should have received the following appreciation from the *Temps* newspaper: 'No one better knew how to construct a phrase, a sentence, a chapter; and by this we mean, not the laborious artifice of a pedant, but that native harmony of a born artist who gives to rhythm the part due to it in the symphony of the words.' And in the same article he is called 'the most classic man of letters, in the favourable sense of the word, of contemporary England.'

In the *Edinburgh Review* of July 1895 there appeared a long critical paper on 'The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson,' a passage from which, relating to his Edin-

burgh days, has already been quoted. The following excerpts from the same source deal with the artistic side of Stevenson's character:

No author need desire a more gratifying tribute than to be mourned and missed as a personal friend by a multitude who only knew him through his books. Nor should Stevenson have deemed it a misfortune that he perhaps took a higher rank among men of letters during his life than may be assigned him by the dispassionate judgment of posterity. He was at the height of his fame when he was with us to enjoy it, and he made no secret of having staked much of his earthly happiness on the endurance of his popularity. Had it been otherwise he would never have made so great a name. For it was his especial charm that he kept himself always in closest touch with the ever-extending circle of his admirers, and to him was given the very rare gift of awakening and intensifying feelings of warm and almost passionate attachment. In fact, with his sensitive and self-revealing versatility he had made friends among all sorts and conditions of men, by taking each or any of them to his innermost confidence.

'Austere Self-Training.'

There was irresistible fascination in what it would be unfair to characterise as egotism, for it came naturally to him to talk frankly and easily himself. No man who was not touchingly free from self-consciousness would have published 'A Child's Garden of Verses.' He cannot address a friend in his melodious rhyming without inviting sympathy and interest by reviving associations and memories. He could never have dreamed, like Pepys, of locking up his confidences in a diary. From first to last, in inconsecutive essays, in the records of sentimental touring, in fiction, and in verse, he has embodied the outer and the inner autobiography. He discourses—he prattles—he almost babbles about himself. He seems to have taken minute and habitual introspection for the chief study in his analysis of human nature, as a subject which was immediately in his reach, and would most surely serve his purposes. We suspect much of the success of his novels was due to the fact that as he seized for a substructure on the scenery and situations which had

impressed him forcibly, so in the characters of very different types there was always more or less of self-portraiture. The subtle touch, eminently and unmistakably realistic, gave life to what might otherwise have seemed a lay figure. For the shrewd, though romantic and imaginative, young Scot had a practical side to his genius. The writer of the 'New Arabian Nights' and 'Dr. Jekyll' had no ill-disciplined mind. He could indulge that soaring fancy of his in extravagant flights, and would embody some morbid day-dream or nightmare in strangely sensational fiction. He soon came to understand what 'fetched' the public, and his ambition was set upon fame with its substantial fruits. But he constrained himself from the beginning to a severe and austere course of self-training. He always had attached extreme importance to style, and it was the finish and ultra-refinement of his style which first conciliated and then almost terrorised the critics. In some of the leading reviews, the 'Travels in the Cevennes' and the 'Inland Voyage' were welcomed with almost rapturous admiration. Thenceforward it had become the fashion to admire, and he made the most of an unusually favourable start. It is too often the case that injudicious or exaggerated praise blights the fair prospects of a promising young writer. It lulls him into carelessness, and excites him to short-sighted over-production. On Stevenson the effect was altogether the reverse. Up to a certain point, with the success of each succeeding book he became more thoughtful and more conscientious. He nursed his growing popularity by guarding his fame, and till health had failed, and he fell back on the collaborative system, each volume from Stevenson's pen was assured of a welcome, and not only numbered its eager readers by the ten thousand, but invariably commanded the consideration or adulation of the reviewers. . . .

It seems strange that the praises lavished upon 'Treasure Island' did not satisfy the writer as to his vocation for fiction. We might have fancied that the mere pleasure of doing brilliant work—of conjuring up, at the touch of his pen, the picturesque characters who lived and breathed—would have encouraged and, indeed, constrained him to persevere in story-telling. On the contrary, he hesitated again, and had anxious consultations with candid friends, who expressed very opposite opinions. One of

the ablest of them assured him, with friendly conviction, that his real calling was essay-writing, and that he would do well to confine himself to that. Fortunately for the many to whom he has given infinite pleasure, Stevenson was guided by more judicious counsels. We venture to think that, with his love of intellectual self-indulgence, had he found novel-writing really enjoyable, he would never have doubted at all. But there comes in the difference between him and Scott, whom he condemns for the slovenliness of hasty workmanship. Scott, in his best days, sat down to his desk, and let the swift pen take its course in inspiration that seemed to come without an effort. Even when racked with pains and groaning in agony the intellectual machinery was still driven at a high pressure by something that resembled an irrepressible instinct. Stevenson can have had little or nothing of that inspiriting inflatus. He did his painstaking work conscientiously, thoughtfully; he erased, he revised, and he was hard to satisfy. In short, it was his weird—and he could not resist it—to set style and form before fire and spirit.

From a critical essay by an anonymous hand in the *Critic* (New York), December 1894:

His Manifold Nature.

To be many-sided, but not to be symmetrical, that, we are told, is the way for an author to take with these times. People must be amused; but they must also have some profit to show for their reading. They like the grotesque; but it must be highly wrought and polished, more Chinese than Gothic. They like to study the present with an eye to the future, and to speculate about the future in order to affect the present. Their trust is in the unknown, and their hope is that the known may mould it. Robert Louis Stevenson had, in a remarkable measure, that combination of qualities which the times required. He was a Bohemian, but a Scotch one; he scamped his plots, but not his sentences; he was fascinated by the new and attached to the old. Commissioned from both the peaks of Parnassus, he wore indifferently the bays or the ivy; but he was oftener to be found in the train of the vagabond god than in that of Apollo. He is most enjoyable

when he has some episode of his Bohemian life in view. There is no question that he had an excellent time trudging with the Cigarette far in the rear and Charles of Orleans in his knapsack by the Loire, dining at the art students' long deal table at Grätz, or sampling a certain barrel of piquette, by which there hangs a tale not to be desecrated by print; camping out with his donkey under the stars in the Cevennes, knocking about among South Sea Islands in the *Casco*, exploring the wynds of Edinburgh and the sand-lots of San Francisco. In such scenes he gave way to his secret inclinations; rushed into dangers, and found how safe a place the world is. He had spasms of fear with little risk, and sympathised at a distance with rogues and wrecks, big and little. That sort of thing might not have satisfied him, if he had not been weak of body and strong of imagination.

There is no better land to vagabondise in than the land of dreams. One may meet with sorry adventures there, but they have no consequences. Most of the thrilling experiences to be found in Stevenson's books were undergone there. Did the bank-account run low, he set to and dreamt a new novel. There appears to have been little difference between his sleeping and his waking labours, except that in doing the former he was free from interruption. The dreams that he records are almost all reasonable. At first he read stories—a common experience. Then he began to live them, with a view to making copy. No particular faculty, he found, was unwilling or unable to do its share of the work. Invention, reason, judgment would all be hard at it, and the book, in all its essential parts, would be conceived and thought out in the morning. But the other side of Stevenson's genius—the law-abiding, artistic side—is almost as important as the inventive. From the very first he has surprised us by the extreme finish of his style. We can fancy him, like Flaubert, trying every possible arrangement of the parts of a sentence, and noting carefully the shades of meaning. The strict discipline to which he must have subjected himself in his art had a strong attraction for him (as it has for all true Bohemians) in real life. If he could not have been a wandering romancer, he would willingly have been a Trappist monk.

A few days after the news of Stevenson's death was confirmed, Mr. William Archer wrote for the *New Review*, then edited by Mr. W. E. Henley, a paper entitled 'In Memoriam: R. L. S.' It appeared in the issue for January 1895, and was dated 18-19 December 1894. The pages here selected contain an estimate of Stevenson as a writer of prose and poetry:

The Artist's Progress.

His earliest writings, descriptive and critical, are astonishingly mature; yet it seems to me that an increasing seriousness, a deepening tenderness, can be traced in the sequence of his works. At first he gloried in his mere strength, he took the athlete's delight in achieving feats of invention and expression. He has told us how imitative was the training to which he subjected himself in boyhood; and he is still, in his first books of travel, criticisms, and stories, 'playing the sedulous ape,' as he phrased it—imitating very eclectically and originally, but still imitating. It is noteworthy that in the Edinburgh Edition of the 'Travels with a Donkey' (how good that he lived to enjoy the homage implied in the instant success of this edition!) we no longer find the italicised proper names, which gave a pretty but somewhat mechanical touch of quaintness to the original copies. He never wrote anything more consummate in their kind than the 'New Arabian Nights'; yet one is glad to think that these exercises in blood-curdling humour came at the beginning of his career as a story-teller, and the Dutch scenes of 'Catriona' near the close. In 'Treasure Island,' masterpiece though it be, he is still imitating, parodying, pouring his genius into a ready-made form. In 'Kidnapped' he breaks aways, half unwittingly perhaps, from the boy's-book convention. The 'Master of Ballantrae' is an independent, self-sufficing romance, no more imitative than the 'Bride of Lammermoor' or 'Esmond'; and 'Catriona,' imperfect though it be in structure, carries the boy's book projected in 'Kidnapped' into the higher region of serious character-study and exquisite emotion. Not even Catriona—that pearl of maidenhood, whom Viola and Perdita would hail as their very sister—not even Catriona has succeeded in dissipating the illusion that Robert Louis Stevenson could not draw

a woman. This very day I have seen the dreary old stereotype rearing its undiminished head in more quarters than one. And Catriona does not stand alone. She has on one hand the Princess Seraphina, on the other the woman who loved the Master of Ballantrae, and became his brother's wife. Nay, more —even a half share in Beau Austin's Dorothy Musgrave should be enough to acquit a man of incompetence in the matter of female character-drawing.

To some of us, perhaps—it is entirely a matter of taste or even of mood—Stevenson, the essayist and traveller, is even more unfailingly delightful than Stevenson the story-teller. But the story-teller, or at least the character-drawer, permeates almost all his work. For grace and tact of reminiscence, where shall we look for his equal? What invaluable characters has he not touched off in a few happy strokes! The dear old Sheriff of Dumbarton who had never been able to read 'Othello' ('That noble gentleman and that noble lady—h'm—too painful for me'); the gardener, who took to himself all the credit for a flourishing plant, but left the blame of failure to Providence, saying, 'Paul may plant and Apollos may water'; John Todd, the stentorian shepherd of the Pentlands; the dying gravedigger who said, 'I hae laid three hunner and fower score in that kirkyard; an' it had been His wull I would hae likit weel to hae made out the fower hunner'—these are only a few of the types he has etched for us in Scotland alone, to say nothing of France and America. Even of four-footed animals he has quite a little gallery, from the immortal Modestine down to the intelligent and gentlemanly 'Woggs.' As a nature-painter, to my thinking, he excelled in sky and atmosphere, in effects of night and early morning. Clear air, blue smoke, and 'caller' waters, or dim woods with throbbing stars above—for such subjects as these he had an incomparable touch. . . .

For my own part, I believe that Stevenson's greatness in prose has unduly overshadowed the rare and quite individual charm of his verse. It is true that verse was not his predestinate medium, that he wrote it rather as a man of consummate literary accomplishment than as a born poet, who 'did but sing because he must.' But, on the other hand, he never wrote save from a genuine poetic impulse; he never lashed himself into a metric

frenzy merely because it was his trade. Therefore all his verse is alive with spontaneous feeling; and so unfailing was his mastery of words, that he succeeded in striking a clear, true note that was all his own.

A French Critic's Appreciation.

M. Marcel Schwob is one of the few foreign critics who have thoroughly understood and appreciated Stevenson. His essay, 'R. L. S.,' in the *New Review*, February 1895, must rank with the best ever written on Stevenson and his work. M. Schwob sets out by telling us how he first came under the spell of Stevenson by reading 'Treasure Island' during a long railway journey. It was the old story, he says in effect, but told in a style that was new. He considers that Stevenson stands in direct succession to Daniel Defoe and Edgar Allan Poe in the possession of that secret of riveting the attention of his readers by the intense mystery behind his narrative—a power of which Dickens shows some glimmerings in 'Two Ghost Stories.' All these writers display the same capacity for endowing the most ordinary things with extraordinary significance; for arriving at startling results by the simplest of means. M. Schwob goes on to say:

Deux des incidents les plus terrifiants en littérature sont la découverte par Robinson de l'empreinte d'un pied inconnu dans le sable de son île, et la stupeur du Dr. Jekyll, reconnaissant, à son réveil, que sa propre main, étendu sur le drap de son lit, est devenue la main velue de Mr. Hyde. Le sentiment du mystère dans ces deux événements est insurmontable. Et pourtant aucune force psychique n'y paraît intervenir: l'île de Robinson est inhabitée—il ne devrait y avoir là d'empreinte d'autre pied que du sien; le Docteur Jekyll n'a pas au bout du bras, dans l'ordre naturel des choses, la main velue de Mr. Hyde. Ce sont de simples oppositions de fait.

Je voudrais en arriver maintenant à ce que cette faculté a de spécial chez Stevenson. Si je ne me trompe, elle est plus saisis-

sante et plus magique chez lui que chez tous les autres. La raison m'en paraît être dans le romantisme de son réalisme. Autant vaudrait écrire que le réalisme de Stevenson est parfaitement irréel, et que c'est pour cela qu'il est tout puissant. Stevenson n'a jamais regardé les choses qu'avec les yeux de son imagination. Aucun homme n'a la figure comme un jambon; l'étincellement des boutons d'argent d'Alan Breck, lorsqu'il saute sur le vaisseau de David Balfour, est hautement improbable; la rigidité de la ligne de lumière et de fumée des flammes de chandelles dans le duel du *Master of Ballantrae* ne pourrait s'obtenir dans une chambre d'expériences; jamais la lèpre n'a ressemblé à la tache de lichen que Keawe découvre sur sa chair; quelqu'un croira-t-il que Cassilis, dans *The Pavilion on the Links*, ait pu voir luire dans les prunelles d'un homme la clarté de la lune, *though he was a good many yards distant*? Je ne parle point d'une erreur que Stevenson avait reconnue lui-même, et par laquelle il fait accomplir à Alison une chose impraticable: '*She spied the sword, picked it up . . . and thrust it to the hilt into the* frozen *ground.*'

Mais ce ne sont pas là, en vérité, des erreurs: ce sont des images plus fortes que les images réelles. Nous avions trouvé chez bien des écrivains le pouvoir de hausser la réalité par la couleur des mots; je ne sais pas si on trouverait ailleurs des images qui, sans l'aide des mots, sont plus violentes que les images réelles. Ce sont des images romantiques, puisqu'elles sont destinées à accroître l'éclat de l'action par le décor; ce sont des images irréelles, puisqu'aucun œil humain ne saurait les voir dans le monde que nous connaissons. Et cependant elles sont, à proprement parler, la quintessence de la réalité.

En effet, ce qui reste en nous d'Alan Breck, de Keawe, de Thevenin Pensete, de John Silver, c'est ce pourpoint aux boutons d'argent, cette tache irrégulière de lichen, stigmate de la lèpre, ce crâne chauve avec sa double touffe de cheveux rouges, cette face large comme un jambon, avec les yeux scintillants comme des éclats de verre. N'est-ce pas là ce qui les dénote dans notre mémoire? ce qui leur donne cette vie factice qu'ont les êtres littéraires, cette vie qui dépasse tellement en énergie la vie que nous percevons avec nos yeux corporels qu'elle anime les personnes qui nous entourent?

M. Schwob then essays to show how essential to and inalienable from the characters they describe are the words wherewith the true artist builds up his fictional beings before our eyes. After relating how unreal a real sheep's heart looked when introduced on the end of Giovanni's dagger in a French performance of John Ford's 'Annabella and Giovanni,' and how at the next performance the audience was duly thrilled when Annabella's bleeding heart, made of a bit of red flannel, was borne upon the stage, he observes:

Il me semble que les personnages de Stevenson ont justement cette espèce de réalisme irréel. La large figure luisante de Long John, la couleur blême du crâne de Thevenin Pensete s'attachent à la mémoire de nos yeux en vertu de leur irréalité même. Ce sont des fantômes de la vérité, hallucinants comme de vrais fantômes. Notez en passant que les traits de John Silver hallucinent Jim Hawkins, et que François Villon est hanté par l'aspect de Thevenin Pensete.

M. Schwob's final paragraph is an eloquent lament for the gifted writer of romance whose death had only been reported a few weeks before this notable study appeared in the *New Review*:

Hélas! nous ne verrons plus rien avec *his mind's eye*. Toutes les belles fantasmagories qu'il avait encore en puissance sommeillent dans un étroit tombeau polynésien, non loin d'une frange étincelante d'écume: dernière imagination, peut-être aussi irréelle, d'une vie douce et tragique. '*I do not see much chance of our meeting in the flesh*,' m'écrivait-il. C'était tristement vrai. Il reste entouré pour moi d'une auréole de rêve. Et ces quelques pages ne sont que l'essai d'explication que je me suis donnée des rêves que m'inspirèrent les images de *Treasure Island* par une radieuse nuit d'été.

An article marked by much charm of style, and certainly one of the ablest studies of Stevenson, man and artist, that have appeared, was Mrs. M. G. Van Rens-

selaer's paper on 'Robert Louis Stevenson and his Writings,' in the *Century Magazine*, November 1895. The writer points out that, in the fullest sense, only those who have tried to please with their pens can appreciate the work of the rare artist who succeeds. She mentions Stevenson's own confessions as to the infinite pains with which he formed his style, and advises every young writer to place that chapter and also the 'Letter to a Young Gentleman' beneath his pillow:

His Mastery of Style.

And there is another chapter of Stevenson's that ought to lie with them. I have forgotten its name, and have not chanced upon it among his collected essays. I read it long ago in a magazine, and I lent it to a friend (until then my friend), who carried it off to Europe and never brought it back. It analysed the riches, poverties, and peculiarities of the English tongue from the technical point of view; and it must have come with a sort of blinding light, as of a revelation from the mount of art, to many a man who had long believed that he knew how to use his tongue. It showed that mere sound helps or hinders sense, and that all sounds must be considered even apart from sense. It showed that a right respect for them means a delicate regard, not merely for constructions and conspicuous cadences, but also for words and syllables as such, for slightest accentuations, for individual letters, their contrasts and harmonies, and the curious meanings they somehow bear irrespective of the sense to which, in this word or in that, man has forced them to contribute. It showed that an artist does not simply set out the broad pattern of his verbal mosaic with care, and carefully proportion its main parts, but thinks of every sentence as a work of art in itself, of every word and letter as a possible jewel or blot, sure to enhance the effect of the finished work if selected rightly, to mar it if chosen by a listless ear.

In short, this chapter explained an art so difficult, and set a task so subtile, endless, and complex (like the task of the fairy-tale princess who was told to sort the feathers pulled from a thousand different birds), that in reading it one might easily have exclaimed, 'No man can write well,' but for the cheerful

fact that its own words had been set in array by Stevenson. Revealing his attitude towards his art, his persistently beheld ideals, it proved that the attitude was not overstrained, that the ideals might be achieved. Perfectly achieved? Constantly, consistently achieved? Stevenson may answer. Perfect sentences, he says, have often been written, perfect paragraphs at times—never a perfect page. . . .

Perfect accord between sense and sound, perfect beauty of sound, and a perfect avoidance of palpable artifice—these, with freshness and a very masculine vigour, are the qualities of Stevenson's prose style.

But the main fact which entitled it to be called a perfect style is its constancy in excellence and charm. It is always firm and complete in texture, and uniform in the sense that, while it varies in spirit to suit the subject in hand, it does not vary in quality from line to line, from page to page. I think that Stevenson himself has really written perfect pages; and, at all events, his style delights us more as a whole than in any of its parts, striking or exquisite though many of these may still appear when torn away from their context. If you like best to be surprised by independent epigrams, by unexpected bursts of eloquence, by sudden marvels of expressional felicity, turn to some other writer. Stevenson will not amaze you thus. But, except very slightly now and then in his earliest efforts, he will never disappoint you or let you down. And this experience ought to seem more amazing than any other could. To do things flawlessly from end to end is a rarer and more satisfying merit than to do portions of them magnificently well.

Mrs. Van Rensselaer is careful to point out, however, that to the making of real literature personality as well as the gift of art is essential:

Really to serve the world as a great artist serves it, really to attain to beautiful, individual, and immortal words, you must have much to say, and things which no one else has perceived and felt in quite the same fashion. You must be a person as well as an artist. And this truth, too, Stevenson's work supports. Within and beyond the technical perfection of his

style, inspiring and infusing it, and to a great degree creating it, lies the strong and charming personality of the man.

A Study in German.

I have received a very interesting pamphlet entitled 'Charakteristische Eigenschaften von R. L. Stevenson's Stil.' The writer is Mr. William P. Chalmers, of Arbroath, and the essay attained for him the doctor's degree from Marburg University. The essay is a valuable and learned contribution to the study of Stevenson. The brightness and grace of Mr. Chalmers's German is particularly noticeable. It almost seems as if he had transferred into the German language some of the beauties of his master's style. His readers will be delighted with some of Mr. Chalmers's renderings of Stevensonian phrases and sentences. 'The wide rustle of the winds' loses nothing as 'der Winde weithin wallendes Rauschen,' and such phrases as 'den grünlichen Schimmer eines winterlichen Sonnenunterganges,' 'das blaue Dunkel der Waldlichtung,' are happy instances of the translator's art. The second portion of the 'Inaugural Dissertation' is a laborious investigation, by words and sentences, of the characteristics of Stevenson's style. A page is given to Stevenson's use of the prefix 'be,' another to his avoidance of relative pronouns, and there is a very admirable selection from his metaphors and similes.—*British Weekly*, October 20, 1902.

His Own Hints on Style.

While on a visit to Auckland, N.Z., Stevenson allowed himself to be 'interviewed' by a representative of one of the local papers on the best course of study for one with literary aspirations. Thus, the following *obiter dicta*:

'If a young man wishes to learn to write English,' said Mr. Stevenson, 'he should read everything. I qualify that by excluding the whole of the present century in a body. People will read all that is worth reading out of that for their own fun. If they read the seventeenth century and the eighteenth century; if they read Shakespeare and Thomas Browne, and Jeremy Taylor and Dryden's prose, and Samuel Johnson—and, I suppose, Addison, though I never read him myself—and browse

about in all the authors of those two centuries, they will get the finest course of literature there is. Those are the two extremes. What we have tried to do in this century is to find a middle road between the two extremes, mostly and usually by being more slovenly. I have only one feather in my cap, and that is I am not a sloven.'

Asked his opinion of Carlyle, Mr. Stevenson replied: 'I should be frightened to tell any young man to read Carlyle. I was afraid to read him when I was young, because I felt he cast a sort of spell upon me that might be called possession, and I was afraid of becoming a mere echo. Your students should certainly read Ruskin—for choice I would have them read "Arrows of the Chace." I would have them read Scott—but I wish you could put down my expression when I say this; it would save a good deal of explanation. He was undoubtedly slovenly. He makes me long to box his ears—God bless him!—but to a luminous and striking degree, he is free from all the faults that many of us possess. I would also like them to read Hazlitt—there's a lot of style in Hazlitt. I would like them—it is curious how I come round to people who are not particularly stylists—I think it is very well worth while to read Napier. His "History of the Peninsular War" seems to me a fine solid piece of work. I suppose it might do them good to read Pater's "Studies of the Renaissance." It is an extreme of a kind, and had a huge influence on me when it was first published. I think it is always wholesome to read Leslie Stephen. I would recommend them to read George Saintsbury. These two last writers would give them short cuts, but they must read the books they read about.'

As to the manner in which reading ought to be done, Mr. Stevenson would make the student read almost everything aloud. 'Too many of us read by the eye,' he said, 'but the man who means to write, must, whether he articulates or not, read everything by the ear. In short, as a musician reads score and can hear harmony, so the literary man, even when skimming with the eye, must be able to hear all the uttered words.'

The author of 'Kidnapped' declared himself a tremendous believer in the classics. 'I have the more cause to be so,' he went on, 'because although I am in the position of Shakespeare

—I have little Latin and less Greek—yet the benefit which I owe to my little Latin is inconceivable. It not only helps one to arrive at the value of words, but you must remember that we are only the decayed fragments of the Roman Empire from which we have all that we value ourselves upon, and I always believe that we can never be so well employed as in endeavouring to understand as well as we can the original meaning of that system of things in whose ruins we live. In the second place, the Latin Language, of which I profess myself a devotee, is so extraordinarily different from our own, and is capable of suggesting such extraordinary and enchanting effects, that it gives a man spur and wings to his fancy.'

From 'Robert Louis Stevenson: A Character Sketch,' by the Rev. W. J. Dawson, in *The Young Man*, July 1893:

'There are many writers who produce excellent and even memorable books, who nevertheless fail to quicken in us any slightest ripple of interest as regards themselves. There are other writers whose most careless page is steeped in so keen a personal element that our admiration for their work is from the first curiously intermingled with affection for themselves. It is to the latter class that Mr. Stevenson belongs. He has the secret of charm.' He admits us to the intimacies of his soul. He explains with the alluring frankness of a child his motives, recapitulates his errors, registers his fluctuations of health, of feeling, of opinion, discloses his methods of thought or labour, and altogether interests us in the problem of himself quite as much as in the story he tells or the plot he weaves. He is a bland and genial egoist, but without a trace of vanity; it is the egoism of the child. We read his books with the curious sense of a haunting presence, as of some light-footed Ariel, or, in more solemn moments, of a spiritual form hovering near us. There is a body terrestrial and a body celestial: the celestial body floats very near us in the liquid atmosphere of Mr. Stevenson's best work. It is given to few authors to produce this effect. We feel it in the work of Carlyle, of Ruskin, of Charles Lamb, and it is safe

'The Secret of Charm.'

to say that it is an effect which only genius can produce. Perhaps we can best measure by such a test the long-debated differentiation of talent and genius; the man of talent interests us in his work, the man of genius makes his work the medium through which we are interested in himself.

Mr. Richard Le Gallienne, reviewing 'Across the Plains' in the *Academy*, May 14, 1892, wrote:

Mr. Stevenson's final fame will be that of an essayist, nearest and dearest fame of the prose-writer. Nearest and dearest, because the largest amount of selfish pleasure enters into the writing of essays, approaching, as it does, as nearly as possible to writing merely for writing's sake—as the lyric poet just sings for singing's sake: the joy in the mere exercise of a faculty. In the essay no octave-spanning architecture has to be considered, with a half-heart that would fain be at the floriation of niche and capital. Such *magnum opus* is, one supposes, the greater work, certainly it is the bigger; but the essayist cannot but feel the essential and somewhat jeering limitation of the greatest monuments of art, monuments which attain their art of majestic completion, simply by a roof, which shuts out the stars. The essayist is essentially a son of Shem, and his method is the wayward travel of a gypsy. He builds not, but he pitches his tent, lights his fire of sticks, and invites you to smoke a pipe with him over their crackling. While he dreamily chats, now here, now there, of his discursive way of life, the sun has gone down, and you begin to feel the sweet influences of Pleiades.

The Fame of an Essayist.

At least, so it is with Mr. Stevenson, the Stevenson we care for most. And it seems certain that it is so he would be remembered by us: for this new volume of essays abounds in continual allusions to the joyous practice of the literary craft, plainly confiding to us that the pleasure of the reader and the writer in their 'Stevenson' is mutual.

The following suggestive passage occurs in a review of 'Weir of Hermiston' by Mr. E. Purcell in the *Academy*, June 27, 1896:

Rich as it is in those perfections of which Stevenson was a supreme master, 'Weir of Hermiston' would never have been a great novel, for a great novel he could never have written. Many years ago I pointed that out in these columns, and hinted at the reason. A stranger, he wrote to tell me that I had divined his secret. We discussed at some length this and kindred matters. He knew, he owned, success was impossible, but he *must* go on trying. In the only letter I have preserved I find one sentence which to those who have deeply studied him means everything; to others it is but a phrase. 'Ethics,' he wrote, 'have ever been my veiled mistress.' He could see that without a firm, strong, undoubting (albeit ignorant or insolent) moral standpoint, no great, grasping novel could be achieved. What he would not see was that great literature is not all great novels; that though the stately galleon, with its noble lines and steady stride, is indeed admirable, the graceful shallop, the saucy frigate, and the storm-loving Greenlander are equally in their way masterpieces. To the end he fought against conviction—'Mind you,' he says, 'I expect my "Justice Clerk" to be my masterpiece.' Yet, I doubt if he was ever deceived as to the result. The great novel never emerged, but in its stead what a roll of successes, and in such various styles! Why complain? Great novelists we have had, but only one man who could give us the 'Isle of Voices,' of all his gems the fairest, rarest, most imperishable. His fame must not be hurt by hysterical patriots; some one should protest, and distasteful as it is, I claim to do so, and for this reason. When I had reviewed 'Virginibus Puerisque' in the *Academy*, Mark Pattison, who had reviewed it, I think, in the *Athenæum*, as we talked it over, approved my youthful enthusiasm, and surprised me by the immense importance he attached to the book and the new author. My faith in Stevenson was primitive, was spontaneous, and has never wavered. Not all his present idolaters can say as much.

His Knowledge of his Limitations.

In her privately printed 'Study' of Stevenson (Copeland and Day, Boston, U.S.A., May 1895) Miss Alice Brown writes as follows on the women-folk of his romance:

The world 'will still be talking' because Stevenson so rigorously excluded women-folk from his tales. Even when he admits them, it is apparently from a species of courtesy, a deference to tradition. One looks to see them humiliatingly conscious that he could have set his scene without their bungling aid. Quite evidently he is a boy who has no mind to play with girls. They are somewhat in the way. He is absorbingly satisfied with games made up of guns and boats, and in such matters girls may not meddle too boldly, lest they unsex them quite. Though love be supremest factor of deeds, he needs it not. He finds dragon-killing sufficiently exhilarating, though Andromeda sit at home, safe at her tambour-frame. But reasons multiply; suggestions grow in clouds. He is too critically wise not to realise that when his puppets do up their hair and put on petticoats, the wires work rustily.

His Heroines.

The Lady of Ballantrae is pure feminine as Lady Esmond, patient and uncomplaining, but she is an abstract of virtue and not its living body. Joanna Sedley's sole touch of nature lies in that one frank outburst when she repudiates her boy's clothes because they did not fit, and Otto's Princess belongs rather to the romance of fairydom than the courts of this civilised world. Catriona does, at times, promise to show herself a real girl, warmly human when she creeps under your plaidie, and with much heroic metal in her; but even she's scarce 'remembered on warm and cold days.' Only Barbara Grant quite rouses the heart, but she is no more than a gallant lad born for the Forest of Arden or some merry outlawry, 'chasing the red deer and following the roe.'

No, it is useless to turn the fact, or mouth it in the telling; from that rich and magic scrip of his, the gods omitted the one little key to the feminine heart. Possibly he fails to emulate Meredith's portraiture, because he lacks Meredith's partisanship. The feminine spirit, fostering, intuitive in sympathy, draws and holds him; he dreams of womanly comradeship, even in woodsolitude, its welcome at his journey's end; but the very complexity of the nature for whose rich dowry he longed, might, when it came to portrayal, have warded away his own too-similar spirit. Praise becomes golden when crowning a manly man

with the highest attributes among those broadly classified as feminine; as the tenderest woman becomes all the rarer having drunk in manly virtues. When each partakes of the other's best, then are both nearer God's image than any creature yet conceived.

Stevenson had all the complexity of make-up ordinarily accorded womankind, her special lustre superadded to his own birthright of courage, honour, and truth; and in style, plot, character-drawing, even in formulated religion, he took refuge, through the attraction of difference, in the simple and the free. Moreover, woman is not only complex, but she is more artificial than man, more closely fettered by the restraints of traditionary law. More dramatic than he, she not only becomes what nature made her, and what she would fain make herself, but also what man expects her to be. But Stevenson loved to paint souls that live near the heart of things, and who, bad or good, are governed, not by acquired morality but by the great primal springs of action. He had no space for her who veers and tacks with wandering breezes; his ship must sail straight on under the sweeping wind of elemental passion though to the gulf beneath.

In his study of R. L. S. which he contributed to the American *Review of Reviews*, February 1895, Mr. Charles D. Lanier tells this story:

Lack of 'Feminine Interest.'

During his stay in the Adirondacks, an American lady asked Stevenson why women did not play a more important *rôle* in his stories. At that time there had been love-making in none of his books except 'Prince Otto'; and that exquisitely poetic, but utterly unhuman, tale scarcely counts among the records of flesh and blood. The novelist replied, with an engaging frankness, that the particular virtue which appealed to him most strongly, and which he loved to celebrate in fancy, was physical courage of the adventurous variety; and that women were wholly lacking in that. The story goes that his fair *tête-à-tête* spent the succeeding half-hour in heaping on him instance after instance of womanly daring. This incident surely had nothing to do with Catriona,

but she came to the world shortly after, in 'David Balfour,' and a very fine figure of a maiden she is. There is, however, no real sweethearting between her and David. In all his score or more of volumes, Stevenson has not a touch of white muslin and blue ribbon, of the pretty sentimental. He reluctantly gives us a passion here and there, but it would be a sad misnomer to call it a tender passion. His men see the maidens of their destiny in a turbulent street, or as they pace some weird, solitary links. An eyeflash, and the thing is done. They love at once like strong men and passionate women, with never a spoony couple among them; and the wooing is done to an accompaniment of sword-play and the angry bark of horse-pistols.

The *Spectator* thus condenses the story of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde from the pages of Mr. Graham Balfour's 'Life':

The story of Jekyll and Hyde, its inception and execution, is one of the romances of the profession. Conceived in an ecstasy of excitement, it was entirely recast by the author on a hint from his most tried and trusted critic, and Mrs. Stevenson came upstairs to find her invalid in bed with a pile of ashes beside him. Recognising the justice of her criticism that the work should be an allegory, while he had made it a story, he had burned the entire work in the original draft, lest he should be tempted to use too much of it in rewriting. It was an act of heroism, for the story as he first wrote it—more on the line of Markheim—had taken the strongest hold of him. Yet, what with writing and rewriting, it was rough hewn into its present shape within three days.

An Artist's Heroism.

Interviewed by the *Sydney Presbyterian* during his visit to the capital of New South Wales, in March 1893, Stevenson smiled when the interviewer compared his mastery of English to Ruskin's.

'Read "Arrows of the Chace," and see if I can write as well as he,' was the rejoinder.

His Favourite Story.

He went on to say that he had deliberately tried to form a good style. He wrote 'The Wreckers' in collaboration with Mr. Osbourne. They talked over the plot and the characters,

and Mr. Osbourne wrote the first copy of the book. Then he himself worked it all over again, rewriting every line. He spent a whole month in rewriting one of the chapters. In answer to a straight question, Mr. Stevenson said that his favourite among his books was 'Kidnapped.' Mrs. Stevenson, who had just entered the room, said that she liked best his 'Life of Fleeming Jenkin.' 'I cried over that book, and never over anything else of his,' she added. Mr. Stevenson said that he believed, as a piece of literature, 'Thrawn Janet' was the best piece of work he had done.

These notes on the novelist's literary ideals and methods of work are taken from Mr. Charles D. Lanier's article in the American *Review of Reviews*, February 1895, which has been quoted already:

Methods of Work.

Stevenson was brimming with startling literary projects and bizarre schemes. Letters to his friends would schedule a dozen more or less astounding tasks he had set himself, though but few of them were ever carried out. The plots of his stories were carefully outlined in his teeming imagination, then he bent himself, regardless of all obstacles, to obtain the exact local colour which would enable him to 'tell the story just as it happened.' Nothing short of actual prostration could daunt him in the pursuit of the truths he deemed essential for a setting. He sailed to meet his wedding-day on an emigrant ship, in disguise, with the idea of gathering special material, and arrived in New York desperately ill; he boarded an emigrant train with the uncleanly crew he had voyaged with, and suffered a two weeks' journey across the continent to his bride. Needless to say, there was a deal of nursing to do before any marrying could be thought of, nor does he seem in this instance to have found literary availability in the rough experience.

The first draft of a story Stevenson wrote out roughly, or dictated to Lloyd Osbourne. When all the colours were in hand for the complete picture, he invariably penned it himself, with exceeding care, writing in the easy, upright, compact style characteristic of the man of letters. If the first copy did not please

him, he patiently made a second or a third draft. In his stern, self-imposed apprenticeship of phrase-making he had prepared himself for these workmanlike methods by the practice of rewriting his trial stories into dramas; and then reworking them into stories again. Mr. Burlingame, editor of *Scribner's* and a long-time friend of the novelist, tells me that when Stevenson was writing the little speculative essays entitled 'End Papers' in that magazine, he was known to make so many as seven drafts of a particular flight before he was willing to let it go forth to the world.

Mr. Stephen Gwynn wrote an article on 'The Posthumous Works of Robert Louis Stevenson' for the *Fortnightly Review*, April 1898. Mr. Gwynn began by saying:

Posthumous Works.

In the common work of the world men drop and disappear; they pass out of the ranks and another fills the gap; worse men may succeed better, better men may succeed worse, but no place remains vacant, for the world's work must go on, and the sad proverb says there is no man indispensable. But with great artists the case is otherwise. They furnish something which, for ordinary uses, is wholly superfluous; or, to put it more truly, they create a need which no one but themselves can supply. Living, they give something inseparable from themselves, something which they alone have the secret of making; and dying, they leave nothing for others to succeed to but their example. And for that reason the death of a great artist before his work has been completed brings to those who value the work of artists the most intimate sense of personal loss. We lament the untimely death of Keats and Shelley as we do not lament for Pitt and Fox cut off in their prime; presumably because we cannot figure distinctly in our minds the work which those statesmen might have done in shaping the course of events, or in moulding the nation's character, but we know absolutely that another ten years added to the life of Keats or Shelley would have endowed us with many imperishable possessions. It is for this reason that hardly any

death within a young man's memory has left such a blank as Stevenson's.

It was the light thrown upon the romancer's method of working by the 'Vailima Letters' which apparently suggested to Mr. Gwynn his study of Stevenson's posthumous books, or rather fragments. He points out the great change which came over the author's life after settling in Samoa, illustrating this by apt quotations from the 'Letters':

Here you had a man with the keenest desire to keep his flow of impressions bright and changing; infinitely preferring death to stagnation; and now by a kind of reprieve, sent out from his sick-room, where he was merely a looker-on and a hearer of second-hand recitals, to play his part on a stage, small indeed, but strangely picturesque, and amply furnished with a display of the elemental passions. It was a complete release from literary-isms, and, as a release, Stevenson welcomed it for the good of his art. 'When I was filling baskets all Saturday in my dull, mulish way, perhaps the slowest worker there, surely the most particular and the only one that never looked up or knocked off, I could not but think I should have been sent on exhibition as an example of young literary men.' Here is how to learn to write, might be the motto. . . .

Life about him was more varied and more emotional than it could well be in a civilised country. He saw islanders in revolt, sitting with Winchester rifles on their knees, and at the sight the aboriginal in him 'knickered like a stallion.' One feels in his letters almost a plethora of new impressions; his brain was overloaded with all this strangeness, and could not readily assimilate it. Give to a man so keenly participant in all the life about him a scene, so varied, so beautiful and so exciting, in exchange for the monotony of a sick-room; add health and vigour restored instead of a cripple's existence; and the strange thing would be if there were not a transformation. Stevenson was conscious of it himself, and even in the heavy depression which settled down on him before the end, he writes in the last of all these letters: 'I look forward confidently to an aftermath;

math; I do not think my health can be so hugely improved without some subsequent improvement in my brains. Though, of course, there is the possibility that literature is a morbid secretion, and abhors health!'

Health, unhappily, was as illusory as his dread of an exhausted vein. Three months after he wrote these words he died, while engaged upon 'Weir of Hermiston,' having gone back for the greatest efforts of his art to the scenes of his boyhood, but with a manner entirely altered. It is curious to note how gradual was the change in his style. The new world about him he first attempted to utilise for literature in a book of descriptive letters, which, after an incredible deal of hard labour, proved a failure and disappointment. But as he worked on it, there flashed into his head one day a story which, he says, 'shot through me like a bullet in one of my moments of awe, alone in that tragic jungle.' It was not the descriptive writer nor the essayist who could give the soul of that strange island life, with its mixture of gentle savagery and buccaneering commerce; it was the writer of tales. This first story was the 'Beach of Falesà,' which marks a new development in his work. But the change was not complete. In 'Catriona' Stevenson went back to his old style and old subjects. 'The Wreckers' was a sort of compromise between the old and the new, and finally, in the 'Ebb-Tide,' the new material found for itself a new manner. Stevenson was doubtful at first of this 'forced, violent, alembicated style'; the story was finished in bitterness of heart. 'There it is, and about as grim a tale as was ever written, and as grimy and as hateful.' But when the proofs came back he was of another mind. 'I did not dream it was near as good; I am afraid I think it excellent. It gives me great hope, as I see I *can* work with that constipated mosaic manner, which is what I have to do just now with 'Weir of Hermiston.'

'St. Ives' is again a compromise. But 'Weir' and what remains of the 'Young Chevalier' and 'Heathercat,' are kindred in style to the 'Ebb-Tide'—a style perfectly distinct from that of his earlier and lighter romances. Thus it would appear that the new way of life and new surroundings produced in him a new manner, which first formed itself in treatment of the new material, but received its highest and, unhappily, its latest

expression in what remains of the great story that went back across many thousand miles of ocean to that confused huddle of grey familiar hills. . . .

The love scenes in 'Weir of Hermiston' are almost unsurpassable, but the central interest of the story lies elsewhere—in the relations between father and son. Whatever the cause, the fact is clear that in the last years of his life Stevenson recognised in himself an ability to treat subjects which he had hitherto avoided, and was thus no longer under the necessity of detaching fragments from life. Before this, he had largely confined himself to the adventures of roving men where women make no entrance; or if he treated of a settled family group, the result was what we see in the 'Master of Ballantrae,' which, as he observes, 'lacked all pleasurableness, and hence was imperfect in essence.' . . .

The world which does not care about fragments, will not often read 'Weir of Hermiston,' but for artists it will remain a monument. Some have said that Stevenson was too much of an artist—too studious of form, too neglectful of the matter; desiring rather to express something perfectly than to attempt what might baffle expression. I, on the other hand, believe that he was studiously schooling his faculties with a modesty surely to be commended, till he should feel them equal to the full organ. And at least in this story there is no shirking of the universal interests, no avoidance of the common driving motives of existence at their highest tension. Here you have certainly—for Stevenson never neglected the appeal to the aboriginal fighter in man—the wild tale of the 'Four Black Brothers'—that sudden outburst of savagery, over which the crust of respectable church-going existence had settled down and hardened, but which spoke of violent possibilities. But the essential and the strongest scenes of the book were not to depend on the rough and tumble of incident, or on any melodramatic surroundings. Here, for the first time in Stevenson, you really have the bewildering atmosphere of woman, the glamour of sex, not only in the younger Kirstie, but in her elder of the same name—a far more wonderful and difficult piece of portraiture—who pours out to Archie a heart that has not known how to grow old. And poetry or adventure apart,

are there not tragic issues enough in the grim prose of Hermiston's dealings with his son?

Mr. Gwynn then ventures upon some speculations as to how Stevenson would have finished 'Weir of Hermiston,' and concludes his able study with these words:

However, these are idle speculations; the story will never be told us now. Only this is to be said: that enough of it is left to be a high example—enough to prove that Stevenson's life-long devotion to his art was on the point of being rewarded by such a success as he had always dreamed of; that in the man's nature there was power to conceive scenes of a tragic beauty and intensity unsurpassed in our prose literature, and to create characters not unworthy of his greatest predecessor. The blind stroke of fate had nothing to say to the lesson of his life; here was a man who went the right way to work; and though we deplore that he never completed his masterpieces, we may at least be thankful that time enough was given him to prove to his fellow-craftsmen that such labour for the sake of art is not without Art's peculiar reward—the triumph of successful execution.

The writer of the article on Stevenson in the *Quarterly Review*, April 1895, pictures the 'arctic season' of Calvinism which Scotland suffered before Burns arose with his warm breath of passion and revolt to thaw it away. He then proceeds:

When the nineteenth century was young, if Europeans of culture were asked to name the glories of Scotland, they passed by its theologians, and gave Ossian, Burns, Hume, and Scott as the summits visible to every seaman passing along the Caledonian shores. *Ludens in orbe terrarum!* Was ever so astonishing a transformation witnessed? The systematic divine had changed to scepticism; the Puritan was a dreamer with open eyes, the bloodless ascetic an artist.

Scott and Stevenson.

Nevertheless, Scott, although instinct with creative fire, was

earthborn and solid, moving over the ground with thundering hoofs and to the clash of martial music, yet scarcely ambitious to mount into the air of artistic inspiration. As Stevenson judges, 'he was a great day-dreamer, a seer of fit and beautiful and humorous visions, but hardly in the manful sense, an artist at all.' He pleased himself, and so he pleases us. With an unconscious and innate love of the romantic—that antipodes to Calvin's 'Institutes'—he went gathering stories from old time. But a scholar in any deep sense he was not; a deliberate artist the extempore and commercial haste of his never-wearied pen forbade him to be. This one crowning touch, the unpardonable sin against austere tradition, it was left for Stevenson to attempt. And he has succeeded. Spurning the fields of dreary fact, and striking out sparks of fire from his heels when condemned to encounter them, he has sprung up like the winged Greek horse into the azure; he has flown away across the Ægean and the Tyrrhene Sea to the islands where the golden apples are ripening, to the Hesperides and the world of divine fable, his inheritance by nature, his prize and booty, thanks to favouring fortune.

The antithesis between philosophy, carried in the form of religion to its extreme point, and art made an end in itself, could not be more sharply stated. Stevenson is the successor of Scott; and, wielding the golden sceptre of style which brings long renown, he must share with that immortal the fame—so brilliant and yet so unexpected—that Scottish romance has won for itself.

Writing in the *Bookman*, February 1895, 'Ian Maclaren submitted this estimate of Stevenson's literary qualities:

Fourteen years ago our author laid down in the *Fortnightly Review* the two duties incumbent on any man who enters on the business of writing—'truth to the fact and a good spirit in the treatment.' One dares to say without rebate to-day, that he fulfilled his own conditions, for he saw life whole and he wrote of it with sympathy. He brought also to his task a singular genius, which gave him an almost solitary place. It was difficult to name a living artist in words that could be compared with him who reminded us at every turn of Charles Lamb and William

Compared with Shakespeare.

Hazlitt. There are certain who compel words to serve them, and never travel without an imperial bodyguard; but words waited on Stevenson like 'humble servitors,' and he went where he pleased in his simplicity, because every one flew to anticipate his wishes. His style had the thread of gold, and he was the perfect type of the man of letters—a humanist whose great joy in the beautiful was annealed to a fine purity by his Scottish faith; whose kinship was not with Boccaccio and Rabelais, but with Dante and Spenser. His was the magical touch that no man can explain or acquire; it belongs to those only who have drunk at the Pierian spring. There is a place at the marriage feast for every honest writer, but we judge that our master will go to the high table and sit down with Virgil and Shakespeare and Goethe and Scott.

Stevenson as a Poet.

Mr. Edmund Gosse wrote in *Longman's Magazine*, October 1887, a study of Stevenson's poetry. The essay is reprinted in revised form in Mr. Gosse's book 'Questions at Issue,' published in 1893, from which the quotations below are taken by permission. Mr. Gosse commences with a reference to the authors who have only 'swept with hurried hands the strings'; authors with whom poetry has been an incident of their literary nature rather than a ruling passion. 'Though Stevenson had been essentially a prose writer,' says Mr. Gosse, 'the ivory shoulder of the lyre has peeped out now and then.' He proceeds:

'A Child's Garden of Verses' has now been published long enough to enable us to make a calm consideration of its merits. When it was fresh, opinion was divided, as it always is about a new strong thing—between those who, in Mr. Longfellow's phrase about the little girl, think it very, very good, and those who think it is horrid. After reading the new book, the 'Underwoods,' we come back to 'A Child's Garden,' with a clearer sense of the writer's intention, and a wider experience of his poetical outlook upon life. The later book helps us to comprehend the former; there is the same sincerity, the same buoyant simplicity, the same curiously candid and confidential attitude of mind.

If any one doubted that Mr. Stevenson was putting his own childish memories into verse in the first book, all doubt must cease in reading the second book, where the experiences, although those of an adult, have exactly the same convincing air of candour. . . .

The various attitudes of literary persons to the child are very interesting. There are, for instance, poets like Victor Hugo and Mr. Swinburne who come to admire, who stay to adore, and who do not disdain to throw their purple over any humble article of nursery use. They are so magnificent in their address to infancy, they say so many brilliant and unexpected things, that the mother is almost as much dazzled as she is gratified. We stand round, with our hats off, and admire the poet as much as he admires the child; but we experience no regret when he presently turns away to a discussion of grown-up things. We have an ill-defined notion that he reconnoitres infancy from the outside, and has not taken the pains to reach the secret mind of childhood. It is to be noted, and this is a suspicious circumstance, that Mr. Swinburne and Victor Hugo like the child better the younger it is.

> 'What likeness may define, and stray not
> From truth's exactest way,
> A baby's beauty? Love can say not,
> What likeness may.'

This is charming; but the address is to the mother, is to the grown-up reflective person. To the real student of child-life the baby contains possibilities, but is at present an uninteresting chrysalis. It cannot carry a gun through the forest, behind the sofa-back; it is hardly so useful as a cushion to represent a passenger in a railway-train of inverted chairs.

Still more remote than the dithyrambic poets are those writers about children—and they are legion—who have ever the eye fixed upon morality, and carry the didactic tongue thrust in the cheek of fable. The late Charles Kingsley, who might have made so perfect a book of his 'Water Babies,' sins notoriously in this respect. The moment a wise child perceives the presence of allegory, or moral instruction, all the charm of a book is gone. Parable is the very antipodes of childish 'make-believe,' into

which the element of ulterior motive or secondary moral meaning never enters for an instant. . . .

It would be easy, by multiplying examples, to drive home my contention that only two out of the very numerous authors who have written successfully on or for children have shown a clear recollection of the mind of healthy childhood itself. Many authors have achieved brilliant success in describing children, in verbally caressing them, in amusing, in instructing them; but only two, Mrs. Ewing in prose, and Mr. Stevenson in verse, have sat down with them without disturbing their fancies, and have looked into the world of 'make-believe' with the children's own eyes. If Victor Hugo should visit the nursery, every head of hair ought to be brushed, every pinafore be clean, and nurse must certainly be present, as well as mamma. But Mrs. Ewing or Mr. Stevenson might lead a long romp in the attic when nurse was out shopping, and not a child in the house should know that a grown-up person had been there. There are at least a dozen pieces in the 'Child's Garden' which might be quoted to show what is meant. 'The Lamplighter' will serve our purpose as well as any other:

> 'My tea is nearly ready and the sun has left the sky;
> It 's time to take the window to see Learie go by;
> For every night at tea-time, and before you take your seat,
> With lantern and with ladder he comes posting up the street.
>
> Now Tom would be a driver and Maria go to sea,
> And my papa 's a banker and as rich as he can be;
> But I, when I am stronger and can choose what I 'm to do,
> O Learie, I 'll go round at night and light the lamps with you!
>
> For we are very lucky, with a lamp before the door,
> And Learie stops to light it as he lights so many more.
> And O! before you hurry by with ladder and with light,
> O Learie, see a little child, and nod to him to-night.'

In publishing this autumn a second volume, this time of grown-up verses, Mr. Stevenson has ventured on a bolder experiment. His 'Underwoods,' with its title openly borrowed from Ben Jonson, is an easy book to appreciate and enjoy, but not to review. In many respects it is plainly the work of the same

fancy that described the Country of Counterpane and the Land of Story-books, but it has grown a little sadder, and a great deal older. There is the same delicate sincerity, the same candour and simplicity, the same artless dependence on the good faith of the public. The ordinary themes of the poets are untouched; there is not one piece from cover to cover which deals with the passion of love. The book is occupied with friendship, with nature, with the honourable instincts of man's moral machinery. Above all, it enters with great minuteness, and in a very confidential spirit, into the theories and moods of the writer himself. It will be to many readers a revelation of the everyday life of an author whose impersonal writings have given them so much and so varied pleasure. Not a dozen ordinary interviewers could have extracted so much of the character of the man himself as he gives us in these one hundred and twenty pages. .. . .

It would be arrogant in the extreme to decide whether or no Mr. R. L. Stevenson's poems will be read in the future. They are, however, so full of character, so redolent of his own fascinating temperament, that it is not too bold to suppose that so long as his prose is appreciated those who love that will turn to this. There have been prose writers whose verse has not lacked accomplishment of merit, but has been so far from interpreting their prose that it rather disturbed its effect and weakened its influence. Cowley is an example of this, whose ingenious and dryly intellectual poetry positively terrifies the reader away from his eminently suave and human essays. Neither of Mr. Stevenson's volumes of poetry will thus disturb his prose. Opinions may be divided as to their positive value, but no one will doubt that the same characteristics are displayed in the poems, the same suspicion of 'the abhorred pedantic sanhedrim,' the same fulness of life and tenderness of hope, the same bright felicity of epithet as in the essays and romances. The belief, however, may be expressed without fear of contradiction that Mr. Stevenson's fame will rest mainly upon his verse and not upon his prose, only in that dim future when Mr. Matthew Arnold's prophecy shall be fulfilled, and Shelley's letters shall be preferred to his lyrical poems. It is saying a great deal to acknowledge that the author of 'Kidnapped' is scarcely less readable in verse than he is in prose.

Mr. A. W. Pinero delivered a lecture on 'Robert Louis Stevenson: the Dramatist,' to the members of the Philosophical Institution of Edinburgh at the Music Hall, Edinburgh, on Tuesday, February 24, 1903. The abridgment of Mr. Pinero's lecture given below is made by permission from the copyright version printed at the Chiswick Press. 'Stevenson the Dramatist.'

Mr. Pinero began with a reference to the slender popularity of Stevenson's plays, and excluded from his criticism 'The Hanging Judge,' as that has never been published, and 'Macaire,' which 'does not profess to be an original work, except in details of dialogue.' His consideration was, therefore, limited to the three plays written in collaboration with Mr. Henley: 'Deacon Brodie,' 'Beau Austin,' and 'Admiral Guinea':

Now, I wish to inquire why it is that these two men, both, in their different ways, of distinguished talent, combining, with great gusto and hopefulness, to produce acting dramas, should have made such small mark with them, either on or off the stage. 'Deacon Brodie' was acted a good many times in America, but only once, I believe, in Great Britain. 'Beau Austin' has been publicly presented some score of times; 'Admiral Guinea' has enjoyed but a single performance. Nor have these pieces produced a much greater effect in the study, as the phrase goes. They have their admirers, of whom, in many respects, I am one. . . . But no one, I think, gives even 'Beau Austin' a very high place among Stevenson's works as a whole; and many people who have probably read every other line that Stevenson wrote, have, as I say, scarcely realised the existence of his dramas. Why should Stevenson the dramatist take such a back seat, if you will pardon the expression, in comparison with Stevenson the novelist, the essayist, the poet?

This question seems to me all the more worth asking because Stevenson's case is by no means a singular one. There is hardly a novelist or poet of the whole nineteenth century who does not stand in exactly the same position. They have one and all attempted to write for the stage, and it is scarcely too much

to say that they have one and all failed, not only to achieve theatrical success but even, in any appreciable degree, to enrich our dramatic literature.

Mr. Pinero proceeded to cite examples from Shelley, Browning, Scott, Coleridge, Byron, Tennyson, Dickens, Thackeray, and other writers of genius, and expressed the opinion that, one and all, they imitated outworn models, 'instead of discovering for themselves, and if necessary ennobling, the style of drama really adapted to the dramatist's one great end—that of showing the age and body of the time his form and pressure.' With this difference, 'that while Stevenson imitated the transpontine plays of the early nineteenth century, most of the other writers I have named imitated the Elizabethan dramatists.' Mr. Pinero continued:

Some of the great men I have mentioned were debarred from success for a reason which is still more simple and obvious—namely, that they had no dramatic talent. But this was not Stevenson's case. No one can doubt that he had in him the ingredients of a dramatist. What is dramatic talent? Is it not the power to project characters, and to cause them to tell an interesting story through the medium of dialogue? This is *dramatic* talent; and dramatic talent, if I may so express it, is the raw material of *theatrical* talent. Dramatic, like poetic, talent is born, not made; if it is to achieve success on the stage, it must be developed into theatrical talent by hard study, and generally by long practice. For theatrical talent consists in the power of making your characters not only tell a story by means of dialogue, but tell it in such skilfully-devised form and order as shall, within the limits of an ordinary theatrical representation, give rise to the greatest possible amount of that peculiar kind of emotional effect, the production of which is the one great function of the theatre. Now, dramatic talent Stevenson undoubtedly possessed in abundance; and I am convinced that theatrical talent was well within his reach, if only he had put himself to the pains of evolving it.

The lecturer then read from Stevenson's 'Chapter on Dreams' the outline of a tragedy which the author credited to 'the Brownies of the brain.' Mr. Pinero described it as 'an intensely dramatic tale,' which proved 'beyond all question that Stevenson had in him a large measure of dramatic talent—what I have called the ingredients, the makings of a dramatist.' From this he turned to the delightful essay called 'A Penny Plain and Twopence Coloured,' to illustrate his early taste for drama, his love of the toy-theatre.

The unfortunate thing is that even to his dying day he continued to regard the actual theatre as only an enlarged form of the toy-theatres which had fascinated his childhood—he continued to use in his dramatic colouring the crimson lake and Prussian blue of transpontine romance—he considered his function as a dramatist very little more serious than that child's-play with paint-box and pasteboard on which his memory dwelt so fondly. He played at being a playwright; and he was fundamentally in error in regarding the drama as a matter of child's-play.

Observe, too, that these dramas of the toy-theatre were, before they reached the toy-theatre, designed for almost the lowest class of theatrical audiences. They were stark and staring melodramas. Most of them were transpontine in the literal sense of the word—that is to say, they had originally seen the light at the humbler theatres beyond the bridges—the Surrey and the Coburg. Many of them were unacknowledged adaptations from the French—for in the early years of the nineteenth century the English dramatist had not acquired that nice conscientiousness which he has since displayed. Yet a drama which was sufficiently popular to be transferred to the toy-theatres was almost certain to have a sort of rude merit in its construction. The characterisation would be hopelessly conventional, the dialogue bald and despicable—but the situations would be artfully arranged, the story told adroitly and with spirit. Unfortunately these merits did not come within Stevenson's ken. . . . But in tactics, in the art of getting their characters on and off the stage, of conveying information to the audience, and so forth,

they [the melodramatists of that time] were almost incredibly careless and conventional. They would make a man, as in the Chinese theatre, tell the whole story of his life in a soliloquy; or they would expound their plot to the audience in pages of conversation between characters who acquaint each other with nothing that is not already perfectly well known to both. Well, his childish studies accustomed Stevenson to the miserable tactics of these plays. Keenly as he afterwards realised their absurdities, he had nevertheless in a measure become inured to them. For the merits of their strategy, on the other hand, he had naturally, as a mere child, no eye whatever. And one main reason of his inadequate success as a dramatist was that he never either unlearned their tactics or learned their strategy. Had he ever thoroughly understood what was good in them, I have no doubt that, on the basis of this rough-and-ready melodramatic technique, he would have developed a technique of his own as admirable as that which he ultimately achieved in fiction.

When he first attempts drama, what is the theme he chooses? A story of crime, a story of housebreaking, dark lanterns, jemmies, centre-bits, masks, detectives, boozing-kens—in short a melodrama of the deepest dye, exactly after the Surrey, the Coburg, the toy-theatre type. It evidently pleased him to think that he could put fresh life into this old and puerile form, as he had put, or was soon to put, fresh life into the boy's tale of adventure. And he did, indeed, write a good deal of vivacious dialogue—the literary quality of the play, though poor in comparison with Stevenson's best work, is of course incomparably better than that of the models on which he was founding. But, unfortunately, it shows no glimmer of their stagecraft. The drama is entitled, you remember, 'Deacon Brodie, or The Double Life.' Its hero is a historical character who held a position of high respectability in eighteenth-century Edinburgh, while he devoted his leisure moments to the science and art of burglary. Here was a theme in which Fitzball, or any of the Coburg melodramatists, would indeed have revelled, a theme almost as fertile of melodramatic possibilities as that of 'Sweeny Todd, the Barber of Fleet Street.' And one would have thought that the future author of 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' was precisely the man to get its full effect out of the 'double life' of his burglar

hero. But not a bit of it. From sheer lack of stagecraft, the effect of the 'double life' is wholly lost. Brodie is a patent, almost undisguised, scoundrel throughout. There is no contrast between the respectable and the criminal sides to his life, no gradual unmasking of his depravity, no piling up, atom by atom, of evidence against him. Our wonder from the first is that any one should ever have regarded him as anything else than the poor, blustering, blundering villain he is. From the total ineffectiveness of the character, one cannot but imagine that Stevenson was hampered by the idea of representing strictly the historical personage. In this, for aught I know, he may have succeeded; but he has certainly not succeeded in making his protagonist interesting in the theatre, or in telling the story so as to extract one tithe of its possibilities of dramatic effect. . . . But it is needless to dwell long on 'Deacon Brodie' —ripeness of stagecraft is not to be looked for in a first attempt, a 'prentice piece. 'The play is chiefly interesting as exemplifying the boyish spirit of gleeful bravado in which Stevenson approached the stage. . . .

In 'Admiral Guinea'—a much better drama—the influence of his penny-plain-twopence-coloured studies is, if possible, still more apparent. 'Deacon Brodie' was the melodrama of crime; this was to be the nautical melodrama. As the one belonged to the school of 'Sweeny Todd,' so the other was to follow in the wake of 'Black Ey'd Susan,' 'The Red Rover,' 'Ben Backstay,' and those other romances of the briny deep in which that celebrated impersonator of seafaring types, T. P. Cooke, had made his fame. If you require a proof of the intimate relation between 'Admiral Guinea' and 'Skelt's Juvenile Drama,' as the toy-theatre plays were called, let me draw your attention to this little coincidence. In his essay on the Juvenile Drama, Stevenson enlarges not only on the sheets of characters, but also on the scenery which accompanied them. 'Here is the cottage interior,' he writes, 'the usual first flat, with the cloak upon the nail, the rosaries of onions, the gun and powder-horn and corner cupboard; here is the inn—(this drama must be nautical, I foresee Captain Luff and Bold Bob Bowsprit)—here is the inn with the red curtains, pipes, spittoons, and eight-day clock.' Well now, the two scenes of 'Admiral Guinea' reproduce, with

a little elaboration, exactly the two scenes here sketched. The first is the cottage interior with the corner cupboard; the second is thus described: 'the stage represents the parlour of the Admiral Benbow inn. Fireplace right, with high-backed settles on each side. . . . Tables left, with glasses, pipes, etc. . . . window with red half-curtains; spittoons; candles on both the front tables.' Here, you see, he draws in every detail upon his memories of the toy-theatre. And in writing the play his effort was constantly, and one may almost say confessedly, to reproduce the atmosphere of conventional nautical melodrama—to rehandle its material, while replacing its bald language with dialogue of high literary merit. And of course he succeeded in writing many speeches of great beauty.

Mr. Pinero then read a scene from the first act of the play, introducing John Gaunt, Kit French, and Arethusa.

The play is full of speeches as beautiful as those I have just read you of Gaunt's; and if beautiful speeches, and even beautiful passages of dialogue, made a good drama, 'Admiral Guinea' would indeed be a great success. But what chiefly strikes one after seeing or reading the play is that Stevenson's idea of dramatic writing was that fine speeches, and fine speeches alone, would carry everything before them. I can picture the collaborators sitting together and discussing the composition of their work, and saying to each other 'This position, or that, will furnish a capital opportunity for a good speech'; I can imagine Stevenson subsequently telling his friend what a splendid 'speech' he had just written. In short, 'Admiral Guinea' is mainly rhetoric, beautifully done, but with no blood in it. The second act—the inn scene—is a monument of long-windedness; while the situation of Gaunt's walking in his sleep—by which Stevenson's friends and admirers, on the occasion of the production of the play in London, set such store—could be cut out of the drama bodily for any bearing it has upon the development of the story or the bringing about of the *dénouement*. I was a witness of the single performance of this piece in London, and can testify to the ineffectiveness of its representation.

In 'Beau Austin' we have certainly Stevenson's nearest approach to an effective drama. In spite of its inacceptable theme, it is a charming play and really interesting on the stage. A little more careful handling of the last act might have rendered it wholly successful. But still we see traces of the old crudity of technique of the toy-theatre, and still the author evidently conceived that the essence of the drama resides in rhetoric, in fine speeches. How artless, for instance, is the scene of exposition, between the heroine's aunt, Miss Foster, and the maid, Barbara, in which half the time Miss Foster is telling Barbara things she knows perfectly well already, and the other half saying things she would never have said to a maid. Then, when it comes to revealing to us the recesses of Dorothy's heart, what do the authors do? They make her speak a solid page and a half of soliloquy—exquisitely composed, but again how rhetorical, how undramatic. . . .

I ask you to turn, at your leisure, to 'Beau Austin' and to study the play for yourselves. I ask you to read the passages —some of them great passages—of dialogue between Dorothy and Fenwick, between Fenwick and Beau Austin, between the Beau and Dorothy; and I submit to you that while there is much in these passages that is beautiful, much that is true and subtle, there is very little that is truly and subtly expressed. The beauty the authors aimed at was, I believe you will agree with me, the absolute beauty of words, such beauty as Ruskin or Pater or Newman might achieve in an eloquent passage, not the beauty of dramatic fitness to the character and the situation. . . .

The dramatist is bound to select his particular form of technique, master, and stick to it. He must not jumble up two styles and jump from one to the other. This is what the authors of 'Beau Austin' have not realised. Their technique is neither ancient nor modern; their language is neither poetry nor prose—the prose, that is to say, of conceivable human life. The period has nothing to do with it. People spoke, no doubt, a little more formally in 1820 than they do to-day; but neither then nor at any time was the business of life, even in its most passionate moments, conducted in pure oratory. I say, then, that even in 'Beau Austin,' far superior though it be to his other plays, Stevenson shows that he had not studied and realised

the conditions of the problem he was handling—the problem of how to tell a dramatic story truly, convincingly and effectively on the modern stage—the problem of disclosing the workings of the human heart by methods which shall not destroy the illusion which a modern audience expects to enjoy in the modern theatre. . . .

Many authors, of course, have deliberately written plays 'for the study,' ignoring—or more often, perhaps, affecting to ignore—the possibility of stage presentation. But this was not Stevenson's case; nor did he pretend that it was. . . .

When Stevenson says 'The theatre is the gold mine,' and when Mr. Graham Balfour tells us that Stevenson felt that 'the prizes of the dramatist are out of all proportion to the payment of the man of letters,' the implication obviously is that the gold mine can be easily worked, that the prizes are disproportionate to the small amount of pains necessary in order to grasp them. That was evidently the belief of these two men of distinguished talent; and that was precisely where they made the mistake. The art of drama, in its higher forms, is not, and can never be, easy; nor are such rewards as fall to it in any way out of proportion to the sheer mental stress it involves. No amount of talent, of genius, will, under modern conditions at any rate, enable the dramatist to dispense with a concentration of thought, a sustained intensity of mental effort, very different, if I may venture to say so, from the exertion demanded in turning out an ordinary novel. Stevenson's novels were not ordinary, and I do not for a moment imply that the amount of mental effort which produced, say, 'The Master of Ballantrae,' might not, if well directed, have produced a play of equal value. But Stevenson was never at the trouble of learning how to direct it well. On the contrary, he wholly ignored the necessity for so doing. What attracted him to the drama was precisely the belief that he could turn out a good play with far less mental effort than it cost him to write a good novel; and here he was radically, wofully in error. And the inadequate success of his plays, instead of bringing his mistake home to him, merely led him, I am afraid, to contemn the artistic medium which he had failed to acquire.

Towards the end of his life, while he was in Samoa, and years

after his collaboration with Mr. Henley had come to a close, it seems to have been suggested by his friends at home that he should once more try his hand at drama; for we find him writing to Mr. Colvin: 'No, I will not write a play for Irving, nor for the devil. Can you not see that the work of *falsification* which a play demands is of all tasks the most ungrateful? And I have done it a long while—and nothing ever came of it.' It is true—it is fatally true—that he had devoted himself in his dramatic ventures to 'the work of falsification'; but that was, I repeat, because he misconceived entirely the problem before him. The art—the great and fascinating and most difficult art—of the modern dramatist is nothing else than to achieve that *compression* of life which the stage undoubtedly demands *without* falsification. If Stevenson had ever mastered that art —and I do not question that if he had properly conceived it, he had it in him to master it—he might have found the stage a gold mine, but he would have found, too, that it is a gold mine which cannot be worked in a smiling, sportive, half-contemptuous spirit, but only in the sweat of the brain, and with every mental nerve and sinew strained to its uttermost. . . . Stevenson, with all his genius, made the mistake of approaching the theatre as a toy to be played with. The facts of the case were against him, for the theatre is not a toy; and, facts being stubborn things, he ran his head against them in vain. Had he only studied the conditions, or in other words got into a proper relation to the facts, with what joy should we have acclaimed him among the masters of the modern stage!

So far as the editor can discover, the only published article in which Stevenson's qualities as an exponent of natural science are discussed is the short note on 'Stevenson and Science,' which appeared in *Natural Science*, February 1895. It is obviously from the pen of a scholar, and as it possesses a certain unique value, it is here reprinted:

Stevenson and Science.

The art of letters has no content of its own and stands in no contrast to science. All of us, in attempting to describe a

fossil or to narrate the life-history of a fern, are engaged in the same pursuit as is the man of letters. The distinction, between him and ourselves, too often is this: we are incompetent craftsmen, and we are persuaded of the untruth that if you have something to say it does not matter how you say it. Men of letters are not a class by themselves; not mere conjurors with words, amusing the rest of the world with the grace and ingenuity of their antics, by their skilful poise of the adjective and clever balancing of the phrase. They are historians, dramatists, novelists, poets, or, sometimes, parsons and men of science who have conquered not only ideas, but the expression of them. This salutary truth, which should be a truism, may serve as an excuse for reference in these pages to Robert Louis Stevenson, who, since last we wrote, has become but a memory.

In our poor opinion there is much of moment to scientific writers in the art of Stevenson. First, there is the method. Steep yourself in your subject, says the common adviser, then sit down and write quickly. But so doing, your matter will ooze out from you in the flamboyant periods of, say, the late Professor Kitchen Parker, or in the more distasteful prolixity of the average German. Not so does the expression of scientific fact take its appropriate place in the art of letters. The most careful selection and arrangement of the facts are needed, so that the salient points may be thrust into prominence, the subsidiary facts restrained into a decent subordination, and vain repetition suppressed. If one but consider; an account of the morphology of the tadpole's skull is as difficult to set forth well as the creature of a boy's story. Yet you read 'Treasure Island' between London and York after a nice decision between it and the current *Truth*, and Long John Silver sticks in your mind, not to be rid of, a permanent possession. Yesterday you read a description, many pages long, of a new genus, anxious on the details, comparing and weighing: to-day you are running round to the library to read again an important point that failed to impress itself. This happy art of presentment comes not by grace or by knowledge; but by patience and labour.

Next, from the words and phrasing much also may be learned. To those unversed in the analysis of sentences, many lines of Stevenson seem whimsically peculiar, full of deliberate abnor-

mality. But let such examine the easy transition from idea to idea, the orderly progression of the exposition, and they shall see how the words and phrases are chosen and arranged for the simple purpose of presenting the ideas in the directest and shortest fashion, which also is the intention, although not the achievement, of scientific writing.

For the mention of Stevenson a sturdier excuse than our need of the qualities of his style may be found in his excursions into the province of natural science. Of these, two are memorable; the essay 'Pulvis et Umbra' in 'Across the Plains,' and a poem entitled 'The Woodman' in the *New Review* for January.

The essay—and we commend it to all readers who do not know their Stevenson—is an attempt with a strongly ethical basis to express a monistic idea of man's relation to the universe, and to contrast with it his kinship to the dust, his thought of duty, and his ineffectual effort to do well. The essay is so short and so well-knit that quotation from it is not advisable. It is however interesting to note that while Professor Huxley in his Romanes lecture laid down that the cosmic process was not only non-moral but immoral, Stevenson reads in it 'a bracing gospel.'

The poem, published last month, is practically an account of the struggle for existence among plants in the tropics, and much of it might be a paraphrase of Dr. Rodway's essay on the struggle for life in a Guiana forest that appeared in our columns. We quote a few lines:

'I saw the wood for what it was—
The lost and the victorious cause;
The deadly battle pitched in line,
Saw silent weapons cross and shine;
Silent defeat, silent assault—
A battle and a burial vault.
Thick round me, in the teeming mud,
Briar and fern strove to the blood.
The hooked liana in his gin
Noosed his reluctant neighbours in;
There the green murderer throve and spread,
Upon his smothering victims fed,
And wantoned on his climbing coil.
Contending roots fought for the soil

Like frighted demons; with despair
Competing branches pushed for air.
Green conquerors from overhead
Bestrode the bodies of their dead;
The Cæsars of the sylvan field,
Unused to fail, foredoomed to yield;
For in the groins of branches, lo!
The cancers of the orchid grow.

The following notes from the pen of Mr. Clement K. Shorter were drawn forth by Mr. Henley's notable contribution to the *Pall Mall Magazine*, and appeared in the *Sphere*, December 7, 1901:

Was Stevenson Overrated?

It is curious, indeed, that the commencement of the inevitable reaction against Stevenson should come from one of his most intimate friends. That is a side of the subject that I would rather leave alone; I feel very little concerned with the personal side of the Stevenson-Henley controversy. I am interested, however, in the attempts to 'place' Stevenson in literature, and in the reaction that too extravagant laudation has naturally produced—rather earlier than one might have expected.

Mr. Millar, in *Blackwood*, gave the first sign of the coming storm, but Mr. Henley writes on this aspect of the subject, at least, with graciousness and benignity as a friend of Stevenson—one who loved him in his years of struggle before wealth and recognition came to him. A greater than Stevenson could not have borne the ecstatic shout and have remained secure on his pedestal. Books about Stevenson have come fast and furious. There is Mr. Cope Cornford's, Miss Simpson's, Mr Baildon's, 'The Vailima Letters' and the 'Letters to Friends,' and finally, Mr. Graham Balfour's 'Life.' What a flood of books there has been!

The fact is that Stevenson had so many generous impulses—to him so many geese were swans. He wrote so cordially to every poor Grub Street hack who sent him his volume that they all pronounced him great in order to magnify themselves, or believed him great because he had the genius to appreciate them. Then his life had really so much of the pathetic. His search for health at Bournemouth, Davos, and Vailima was so sad, and

his good humour, as we see it in print, was so pronounced the while; who could fail to love the man and his books? And those books; how good they were for their decade—admirable stories for the boys, genial fooling in the best of style, excellent essays inculcating the obvious. He gave a great deal of pleasure to his contemporaries and they were not ungrateful, and for our day his work is enshrined in thirty or more fine volumes called 'The Edinburgh Edition'—in my judgment, the handsomest and most perfect example of combined printing and binding that has been seen in our time.

But the too extravagant laudation of 'R. L. S.' has brought its nemesis. First editions of his books went to extravagant prices. His little pamphlet, 'The Pentland Rising,' sold for ten pounds and more, and it was the same with other even more unconsidered trifles. But 'The Pentland Rising' is now worth only two guineas—I would not sell mine, which was the gift of kindly Mr. Charles Baxter, for fifty—and the other booklets and pamphlets are sinking to a more natural and intelligent value. Thanks to Mr. Henley's candour, Stevenson's place in letters will soon fall in the same way to a natural level. . . .

Of course there is really no great harm in the extravagant laudation of a really healthy writer as Stevenson undoubtedly was; it is not given to everybody to know the difference between the very best and the second-best among books. On the other hand, the impulse to put down extravagant laudation is a very natural and a very human one; we remember that the Athenians grew tired of hearing Aristides always called 'the Just.' Robert Louis Stevenson was not an epoch-making writer; he has no place with the very greatest masters in fiction or in thoughtful essay-writing. Any one of his good stories is really not one whit better in style and in vigour than some of the novels that are published to-day —take Mr. Stanley Weyman's 'Count Hannibal,' for example. None of his essays are one whit better than the essays of many of our best latter-day essayists; but, after all, what does it matter? Time is the best antidote.

XI

HIS RELIGION

Naturally this subject is touched incidentally in many other passages quoted elsewhere. The few selections here appended happen to stand alone and to refer directly to the religious side of the novelist. For that reason they are brought together under this heading.

A very able review of Stevenson's work, with especial attention to his philosophy of life, appeared in the *London Quarterly*, October 1895. The concluding paragraphs are chosen for quotation:

'The Rule of Christ.'

If we wish to learn what our writer thought of man's life in relation to the Hereafter, what faith upheld him in face of the mysteries of existence, on what foundation he based the moral code that he enforced, we must seek it elsewhere than in his romances, healthy and bracing as is their teaching in regard to the conduct of life. In 'The Ebb-Tide' indeed the part of *deus ex machinâ* is given to a certain 'dark apostle' and autocratic ruler of men, strong in fatalistic faith, who recognises no living and real force in the world but the Grace of God—'we walk upon it, we breathe it; we live and die by it; it makes the nails and axles of the universe'; and who can passionately urge on a despairing, self-ruined sceptical sinner to 'cast his sins and sorrows on his Maker and Redeemer—He who died for you, He who upholds you, He whom you daily crucify afresh'; but 'The Ebb-Tide' is one of the stories of mixed origin; and were it not, we might reasonably doubt how much of his personal opinion Stevenson

chose to express through this enigmatic Attwater, to whom the author has been pleased to assign some of the sterner, without any of the more endearing traits, that marked the extraordinary character of General Gordon.

There is clearer speech in some of those scattered essays, which contain much of Stevenson's gravest thought and many of his most delightful fancies. Of these one, aptly named 'Pulvis et Umbra,' startles and shocks at first by the concentrated vigour with which it states the extreme pessimistic view. No Buddhist, aspiring to be rid of the abhorred burden of conscious being, and regarding annihilation as the supreme good, could have found stronger terms to express his repulsion for all the phenomena of Life, represented as a 'malady of something we call Matter'; but from a beginning so unpromising the essayist advances by a way of his own to conclusions nowise pessimistic. It is as though he said, 'Take, if you will, the most humiliating view not only of human existence, but of all animated existence; admit no outward beauty or splendour in it; shut your eyes to everything but repulsiveness in its physical manifestations; yet I require you to recognise an inner force acting through it everywhere, that is mysteriously pure, and noble, and powerful'; and this is the sovereign thought of Duty, the pursuit of an ideal of well-doing, which he bids us observe, as an animating principle in the humblest creatures over whom man is dominant, and which is the very heart of man's mystery. Even the spectacle of man's repeated and pathetic failure to live up to his own ideal is 'inspiring and consoling' to this onlooker, since, in spite of long ages of ill-success, the race is not discouraged, but continues to strive as if for assured victory, rendering obedience, however imperfect, to the inner voice that speaks of duty owed to ourselves, to our neighbour, to our God; and it is 'inspiring and consoling' that traces of the same struggle can be discerned in the poor sentient beings, our inferiors. 'Let it be enough for faith that the whole creation groans in mortal frailty, strives with unconquerable constancy: Surely not all in vain.'

Thus a meaning full of hope is wrung from even the gloomiest thoughts that can beset the soul in its hours of darkness. Brighter passages from the same hand breathe the same spirit of solemn trustfulness. Edinburgh, well known and loved by our author

in the days when, on his own showing, he was but a wayward student in its University, sedulously perfecting himself in the right art of literary expression, but often playing truant to class and lecture—Edinburgh taught him unforgotten lessons by its cherishing of the memory of the dead who died for conscience sake; he found 'the martyrs' monument a wholesome, heartsome spot in the field of the dead'; though the special point of conscience for which this martyr or that despised death might not seem momentous to-day, their brave example assured him that for men who do their duty, even under a misapprehension, there will be 'a safe haven somewhere in the Providence of God.' Those student days brought to him a finer lesson in the fall and rising again of a nobly gifted comrade, who through vainglorious self-confidence made shipwreck of his fortunes, and who in the Valley of Humiliation and under the shadow of imminent death learned such patience, such self-abnegation, such love and consideration for others, as had never been his ere he lost 'the strength that had betrayed him.' His memory, though not his name, is tenderly embalmed in the pages of the friend who from his example learned how 'to lose oneself is to be a gainer, to forget oneself is to be happy'; and who in later years, looking on the ways of men with eyes thus opened, could understand much of the inner meaning of the Great Master's words, and could expose the futility of the complaint that 'Christ did not leave us a rule that was proper and sufficient for this world'; a complaint that could only be made by one who had failed 'to conceive the nature of the rule that was laid down.'

If there be meaning in words, we must take it that Stevenson gladly received for himself the rule of Christ, hard though it be to accept, understanding it to be right that 'in our own person and fortune we should be ready to accept and to pardon all'; yet not to stand by passive and see another injured. With reserve, with reverence, with such guards and limitations as become a worker in fiction, he has made his opinion on these great matters clear enough practically; and one may say that his work will thus have not impossibly a wider potency for good than if he had alienated one class of readers and conciliated another by more accurately and avowedly defining his position. This is matter on which each reader must pronounce for him-

self; happily there can be no doubt of the robust, wholesome, and health-breathing tendency of Stevenson's work on the whole, though it deal often with matters of broil and battle, and the wilder possibilities of mortal life.

A Minister's View.

The Rev. W. J. Dawson contributed to the *Young Man* during 1896 a series of papers on 'The Gospel According to the Novelists.' Among the authors thus treated was Robert Louis Stevenson, and the article which Mr. Dawson devoted to him appeared in the September number of that year. It will, therefore, be understood that in the following passages from Mr. Dawson's paper, it is of Stevenson the novelist, not of the essayist, he writes:

Any good writer could describe a duel or a murder with some degree of power and accuracy; but there are few writers who can make us feel that Death and Eternity surround the scene. Stevenson does this. He has a powerful and persistent sense of the spiritual forces which move behind the painted shows of life. He writes not only as a realist, but as a prophet. His meanest stage is set with Eternity as a background.

Take, for example, the astonishing subtlety and truth of the scene in which he pictures Herrick as attempting suicide by drowning, in "The Ebb-Tide." The moment the wretched man takes the water, he begins to swim by a sort of instinct. He is about to 'lie down with all races and generations of men in the house of sleep": there will be plenty of time to stop swimming presently. But could he stop swimming? He knew at once that he could not. 'He was aware instantly of an opposition in his members, unanimous and invincible, clinging to life with a single and fixed resolve, finger by finger, sinew by sinew; something that was at once he and not he—at once within and without him; the shutting of some miniature valve within his brain, which a single manly thought should suffice to open—and the grasp of an external fate ineluctable as gravity. . . . There were men who could commit suicide; there were men who could not: and he was one who could not.' There is not a hint here of the sort of imagination which a commonplace novelist would indulge

in—the marching before the mind of the drowning man of his past life, and so forth; but there is something infinitely more terrible. Stevenson admits us into the very soul of the miserable man. He makes us partners in his extreme self-contempt, the utter self-loathing which makes him feel 'he could have spat upon himself.' He gives us a momentary glimpse of far-off powers that watch the spectacle: a city 'along whose distant terraces there walked men and women of awful and benignant features, who viewed him with distant commiseration.' This is one of the greatest pieces of imaginative writing in our literature, but it is much more than this. It is the work of a man profoundly impressed by spiritual realities, and only such a man could have produced it. . . .

The Scot can rarely escape the pressure of those profound and serious thoughts which constitute religion; and Stevenson carried religion in his very bones and marrow. That which gives his great scenes their most impressive element is not merely their force of imagination or of truth; it is this subtle element of religion which colours them. The awful, the distant, the eternal, mix themselves in all his thoughts. The difference between a great scene of Scott and a great scene of Stevenson is that the first impresses us, but the second awes us. Words, phrases, sudden flashes of insight, linger in the mind and solemnise it. We feel that there is something we have not quite fathomed in the passage, and we return to it again to find it still unfathomable. Light of heart and brilliant as he can be, yet not Carlyle himself moved more indubitably in the presence of the immensities and eternities. Wonder and astonishment sit throned among his thoughts, the wonder of the awestruck child at divine mysteries, the enduring astonishment of the man who moves about in worlds not recognised. It is this intense religious sense of Stevenson which sets him in a place apart among his contemporaries: it is, to use his own phrase, a force that grasps him 'ineluctable as gravity.'

Sometimes, though but rarely, he permits himself a wider latitude. Thus he puts into the lips of Attwater thoughts which no doubt had moved his own heart deeply. Attwater is very far from being a perfectly conceived or rendered character; indeed, he must stand among Stevenson's failures. But he is useful in

showing us the mysticism of his creator's mind. He is a man who walks awestruck through the labyrinth of life. He hears across the desolate lagoon eternity ringing like a bell. He ponders life and death with insistence, with passion and absorption. He preaches to the wretched fugitives who are his guests; he uses the very words which might express Stevenson's own sense of the unseen—'We sit on this verandah on a lighted stage with all heaven for spectators. And you call that solitude.' To Herrick, who has implied his total disbelief in God, he replies that it is by the grace of God we live at all: 'the grace of your Maker and Redeemer, He who died for you, He who upholds you, He whom you daily crucify afresh. . . . Nothing but God's Grace! We walk upon it; we breathe it; we live and die by it; it makes the nails and axles of the universe: and a puppy in pyjamas prefers self-conceit!' A trifle grandiloquent, perhaps, but then Attwater is meant to be a grandiloquent personage, a half-barbarous and half-evangelical South Sea Hercules. Yet surely these words of his are a deep cry out of Stevenson's own heart. A man whose daily breath was a sort of miracle, and who felt that every hour he lived he was cheating the grave of its proper prey, might well feel that he lived literally by the grace of God.

Nowhere does the spiritual genius of Stevenson express itself with such force and fulness as in his 'Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.' . . . Here again we come upon that profound seriousness of soul that underlies all Stevenson's best work; the questioning and philosophic mind groping at the intricate coil of things; the intense imagination of the Celt, fascinated by the grim and subtle mysteries of human nature. The seed-thought of this appalling fable of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde is familiar enough: it is the ancient Pauline description of a war in our members, so that the thing we would, that we do not; and the thing we would not, that we do. The summary of the whole—it might well form the inscription for the title-page—is that great cry wrung out of the very agonised heart of this internecine conflict, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' We have heard the words many times on the lips of preachers and theologians, but one would certainly have doubted if they were capable of being vitalised by the art

of the novelist. . . . A piece of writing like this is a unique achievement in the art of letters. It is really comparable with nothing else; it stands alone. And it is conclusive evidence of that subtlety and force of spiritual genius which gives Stevenson a place apart, and high above all contemporaries, as an interpreter of the deepest things of the human soul. . . .

Stevenson was too modest a man to pose as a thinker; yet a thinker he was, and of great originality and insight. And in the truest sense of the word he was an entirely pious man. He knew what it meant, as he has put it, to go up 'the great bare staircase of his duty, uncheered and undepressed.' In the trials of a life unusually difficult, and pierced by the spear's points of the sharpest limitations, he preserved a splendid and unbroken fortitude. No man ever met life with a higher courage; it is safe to say that a man less courageous would not have lived nearly so long. There are few things more wonderful and admirable than the persistence of his energy; ill and compelled to silence, he still dictates his story in the dumb alphabet, and at his lowest ebb of health makes no complaint. And through all there runs a piety as invincible as his fortitude; a certain gaiety of soul that never deserts him; a faith in the ultimate rightness of destiny which holds him serene amid a sea of troubles.

Miss Alice Brown, whose privately circulated 'Study' has been quoted in our preceding chapter, writes thus of Stevenson's ethical principles as disclosed by his personal confessions:

His 'Simple System of Morals.'

What did Stevenson believe? So simple a system of morals was never more simply set forth. To owe no man anything, paying scot as you go; to consider your neighbour's happiness; to live cleanly and honest; to do no scamp work; to sing loud at your task, and moan, if you must, under cover; and above all, *to obey*: the creed of the soldier and the gentleman. To him, life was evidently, in the noblest sense, a great game of make-believe, the heroic blazonry of the captain who stands unblenching on the bridge, knowing the fire smoulders below, and inwardly sworn to ward off panic till the hour of help. It is impossible to believe

that a creature so exquisitely organised as Robert Louis Stevenson was not sore beset by the nightmare horrors of life; the shapeless fears that rise at our side and clutch at us with impotent though terrifying hands. But with knapsack on his back, he marched with jocund step straight through this shadowy valley, his eyes ever seeking, though no star lit up the dark, his purpose fixed in noble acquiescence on that unseen goal whither we all are thrust although we choose it not. Some of us go stumbling, pushed neck and crop into the unknown; he walked erect and proud, singing the song of joyance as he strode. In the light of such persistent cheer, 'Pulvis et Umbra,' the one dark confession of his life, girds us anew for the fray. For through its very gloom, he proves himself a man like as we are, a man who shrank and then trod firmer yet. No such picture exists of world-making and destruction, of the things that breed and die, of hand-to-hand conflict doomed always to end in dissolution. The strangeness of it all, and stranger still that man should strive! That he should live even spasmodically for others, should struggle to be cleanly, make laws, forego delight! Seen in despairing mood, the whole scheme becomes a hideous, swarming phantasm of life, breaking every instant into rotting death. Then having made that most tragic avowal, he can add:

'Let it be enough for faith that the whole creation groans in mortal frailty, strives with unconquerable constancy: *surely not all in vain.*'

It is a shallow hopefulness that would escape the vision of decay. 'If life be hard for such resolute and pious spirits, it is harder still for us, had we the wit to understand it.' But though we join the cry of lamentation, we must in honour swell the response of hope. That Stevenson could hold up his head and troll his careless ditties to the sun, after that *Miserere* of the soul, opens the mind like a flower to the possibilities of human regnancy. One man has looked hell in the face and stayed undaunted. One man has peered over the gulf where suns are swinging and unmade stars light up the dusk, and yet retained the happy sanity of our common life. He returned from his Tartarean journey lifting to the unseen heaven the great glad cry of ultimate obedience. Therefore will we not despair, nor wish one thorn the less had sprung before his feet. We are the

stronger for his pain; his long conflict helps to make our calm. For very shame, we dare not sulk nor loiter now; and whither Stevenson has gone, there do we in our poor, halting fashion seek the way.

In *Munsey's Magazine*, November 1901, Juliet Wilbor Tompkins, writing on 'The Ethics of R. L. Stevenson,' says that much of Stevenson's philosophy was somewhat strong meat for babes, and alarming results might follow the introduction of its precepts into our nurseries, instead of the more orthodox sentiments. The chief doctrine of the gospel according to Stevenson was the duty of happiness—'be happy and you will be good':

The Apostle of Happiness.

'By being happy, we sow anonymous benefits,' he has said; and again, 'A happy man or woman is a better thing to find than a five-pound note. . . . Their entrance into a room is as though another candle had been lighted. . . . They practically demonstrate the great theorem of the liveableness of life.' . . .

'There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy.' The pious man 'is he who has a military joy in duty —not he who weeps over the wounded.' The pleasures of life, simple, bodily pleasures, he believed in so thoroughly that he could say, 'No woman should marry a teetotaller, or a man who does not smoke'—a half humorous expression of his antagonism to the denial of small joys.

In 'The Amateur Emigrant' he sets boldly forth his belief that happiness 'is the whole of culture, and perhaps two-thirds of morality. Can it be that the Puritan school,' he added, 'by divorcing a man from nature, by thinning out his instincts, and setting a stamp of its disapproval on whole fields of human activity and interest, leads at last directly to material greed?'—a suggestive question, which he does not attempt to answer.

There might be a certain danger in taking his sayings without their context, and without a wide appreciation of the man's uprightness and restraint. One could not pin on the wall of every nursery such alluring statements as this: 'Pleasures are more

beneficial than duties, because, like the quality of mercy, they are not strained, and are twice blessed'; or as this: 'Nature is a good guide through life, and the love of simple pleasures next, if not superior, to virtue.' These can be trusted only to him who has learned to separate true pleasures from false, who can decipher nature's fingerposts more accurately than hot-headed youth is apt to. . . .

A certain austerity and religious gloominess in his father was the subject of earnest protest in many of Stevenson's letters, for to the son there was no true piety without cheerfulness. 'To fret and fume is undignified, suicidally foolish, and theologically unpardonable,' he writes. . . .

No 'bed of resignation' should find a place in Stevenson's garden; 'in its stead put Laughter and a Good Conceit . . . and a bush of Flowering Piety—but see it be the flowering sort; the other species is no ornament to any gentleman's back garden.' Kindness, 'not only in act, in speech also, that so much more important part,' was another sedulously preached and practised doctrine of his. Truth he interpreted as 'not to state the true facts, but to convey a true impression.' He believed, for instance, that we owe it to truth to be articulate in emotions, to express our affections and sympathies, in defiance of the false shame that makes so much good feeling go down to the grave unknown:

He prescribed this cheerfulness for books as well as for people: 'As I live, I feel more and more that literature should be cheerful and brave-spirited, even if it cannot be made beautiful and pious and heroic. The Bible, in most parts, is a cheerful book; it is our little piping theologies, tracts, and sermons that are dull and dowie.' And all this was not the easy overflow of health and animal spirits, bidding other people be gay because the mantle of gaiety clung without effort to his own shoulders. It was the sturdy creed of a harassed, suffering invalid, with death constantly at his elbow; a body hampered and restricted, denied what it most coveted, kept in a subjection that at moments bent

the spirit, but never broke it. No one ever had more obstacles between him and his ideal, or brought a more unfaltering courage to surmount them; or could say with a greater sincerity, 'Sick or well, I have had a splendid life of it, grudge nothing, regret very little.'

Stevenson's charity and tolerance will never be disputed, the writer adds. It was these characteristics which led him to write to a prospective missionary words which, if remembered, might have saved us many a complication:

'You cannot change ancestral feelings of right and wrong without what is practically soul murder. Barbarous as the customs may seem, always hear them with patience, always judge them with gentleness, always find in them some seed of good; see that you always develop them; remember that all you can do is to civilise the man in the line of his own civilisation. And never expect, never believe in, thaumaturgic conversions. What you have to do is to teach the parents in the interests of their great-grandchildren.'

'Leaning towards Catholicism.'

According to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Samoa, Robert Louis Stevenson would, had he lived a little longer, have become a convert to the Roman Catholic faith. 'The novelist thought deeply on religious matters,' says the bishop, 'and showed a leaning towards Catholicism.' Happily it is impossible to tell from Stevenson's romances what his faith was or might become, just as it is impossible to tell from Shakespeare's plays what his faith was.—*Publishers' Circular.*

XII

R. L. S. AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

Few authors of note have seen so many and frank judgments of their work from the pens of their contemporaries as Stevenson saw. He was a 'persona grata' with the whole world of letters, and some of his most admiring critics were they of his own craft—poets, novelists, essayists. In the following pages the object in view has been to garner a sheaf of memories and criticisms written—before and after his death—for the most part by eminent contemporaries of the novelist, and interesting, apart from intrinsic worth, by reason of their writers.

Mr. Henry James, in his 'Partial Portraits,' devotes a long and brilliant essay to Stevenson. Although written seven years prior to Stevenson's death, and thus before some of the most remarkable productions of his genius had appeared, there is but little in Mr. James's paper which would require modification to-day. Himself the wielder of a literary style more elusive, more tricksy than Stevenson's, it is difficult to take single passages from his paper, the whole galaxy of thought and suggestion being so cleverly meshed about by the dainty frippery of his manner.

Henry James.

Mr. James begins by regretting the 'extinction of the pleasant fashion of the literary portrait,' and while deciding that no individual can bring it back, he goes on to say:

It is sufficient to note, in passing, that if Mr. Stevenson had

presented himself in an age, or in a country, of portraiture, the painters would certainly each have had a turn at him. The easels and benches would have bristled, the circle would have been close, and quick, from the canvas to the sitter, the rising and falling of heads. It has happened to all of us to have gone into a studio, a studio of pupils, and seen the thick cluster of bent backs and the conscious model in the midst. It has happened to us to be struck, or not to be struck, with the beauty or the symmetry of this personage, and to have made some remark which, whether expressing admiration or disappointment, has elicited from one of the attentive workers the exclamation, 'Character, character is what he has!' These words may be applied to Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson; in the language of that art which depends most on direct observation, character, character is what he has. He is essentially a model, in the sense of a sitter; I do not mean, of course, in the sense of a pattern or a guiding light. And if the figures who have a life in literature may also be divided into two great classes, we may add that he is conspicuously one of the draped: he would never, if I may be allowed the expression, pose for the nude. There are writers who present themselves before the critic with just the amount of drapery that is necessary for decency; but Mr. Stevenson is not one of these—he makes his appearance in an amplitude of costume. His costume is part of the character of which I just now spoke; it never occurs to us to ask how he would look without it. Before all things he is a writer with a style—a model with a complexity of curious and picturesque garments. It is by the cut and the colour of this rich and becoming frippery—I use the term endearingly, as a painter might—that he arrests the eye and solicits the brush.

That is, frankly, half the charm he has for us, that he wears a dress and wears it with courage, with a certain cock of the hat and tinkle of the supererogatory sword; or in other words, that he is curious of expression and regards the literary form not simply as a code of signals, but as the keyboard of a piano, and as so much plastic material. He has that voice deplored, if we mistake not, by Mr. Herbert Spencer, a manner—a manner for manner's sake, it may sometimes doubtless be said. He is as different as possible from the sort of writer who regards words

as numbers, and a page as the mere addition of them; much more, to carry out our image, the dictionary stands for him as a wardrobe, and a proposition as a button for his coat.

Mr. James next touches upon the objection that Stevenson has too much manner for his matter, and observes, 'The main thing he demonstrates, to our own perception, is that it is a delight to read him, and that he renews this delight by a constant variety of experiment.' He describes that class of literary workers who, acquiring reputation for a speciality, 'turn out an article for which there is a demand,' but: 'It is just because he has no speciality that Mr. Stevenson is an individual, and because his curiosity is the only receipt by which he produces. Each of his books is an independent effort —a window opened to a different view.' He adds: 'Though Mr. Stevenson cares greatly for his phrase, as every writer should who respects himself and his art, it takes no very attentive reading of his volumes to show that it is not what he cares for most, and that he regards an expressive style only, after all, as a means.'

Mr. James then proceeds to deal at length and individually with Stevenson's works as they then stood; but it will be sufficient to quote only his notes on the leading characteristics of his subject as these appealed to him at the time of his writing:

What makes him (Stevenson) so is the singular maturity of the expression that he has given to young sentiments: he judges them, measures them, sees them from the outside, as well as entertains them. He describes credulity with all the resources of experience, and represents a crude stage with infinite ripeness. In a word, he is an artist accomplished even to sophistication, whose constant theme is the unsophisticated.

Reference to the 'Child's Garden' suggests this reflection on its author's knowledge of childhood:

What is peculiar to Mr. Stevenson is that it is his own

childhood he appears to delight in, and not the personal presence of little darlings. Oddly enough, there is no strong implication that he is fond of babies; he doesn't speak as a parent, or an uncle, or an educator—he speaks as a contemporary absorbed in his own game. That game is almost always a vision of dangers and triumphs, and if emotion, with him, infallibly resolves itself into memory, so memory is an evocation of throbs and thrills and suspense. He has given to the world the romance of boyhood, as others have produced that of the peerage and the police and the medical profession.

In the second part of his study Mr. James has this to say of one of the most striking features in the life and art of Stevenson:

His appreciation of the active side of life has such a note of its own that we are surprised to find that it proceeds in a considerable measure from an intimate acquaintance with the passive. It seems too anomalous that the writer who has most cherished the idea of a certain free exposure should also be the one who has been reduced most to looking for it within, and that the figures of adventurers who, at least in our literature of to-day, are the most vivid, should be the most vicarious. The truth is, of course, that as the 'Travels with a Donkey' and 'An Inland Voyage' abundantly show, the author has a fund of reminiscences. He did not spend his younger years 'in a parlour with a regulated temperature.' A reader who happens to be aware of how much it has been his later fate to do so may be excused for finding an added source of interest—something indeed deeply and constantly touching—in this association of peculiarly restrictive conditions with the vision of high spirits and romantic accidents, of a kind of honourably picaresque career.

Mr. James concludes with the opinion that 'Kidnapped' represented the best work of Stevenson up to that time (1887)—'the episode of the quarrel and the two men (David and Alan) on the mountain-side is a real stroke of genius, and has the very logic and rhythm of life.'

He suspects that Stevenson's ideal of the delightful work of fiction would have been 'the adventures of Monte Cristo by the author of "Richard Feverel."'

Writing from Davos on March 1, 1886, to Stevenson, the late John Addington Symonds makes the following reference to 'Jekyll and Hyde' (the quotation is from Mr. Horatio F. Brown's biography of Symonds):

John Addington Symonds.

I doubt whether any one has the right so to scrutinise 'the abysmal deeps of personality.' You see I have been reading Dr. Jekyll. At least I think he ought to bring more of distinct belief in the resources of human nature, more faith, more sympathy with our frailty, into the matter than you have done. The art is burning and intense. The Peau de Chagrin disappears, and Poe's work is water. Also, one discerns at once that this is an allegory of all twy-natured souls who yield consciously to evil. Most of us are on the brink of educating a Mr. Hyde at some epoch of our being. But the scientific cast of the allegory will only act as an incentive to moral self-murder with those who perceive the allegory's profundity. Louis, how had you the 'ilia dura, ferro et ære triplici duriora' to write Dr. Jekyll? I know now what was meant when you were called a sprite.

You see I am trembling under the magician's wand of your fancy, and rebelling against it with the scorn of a soul that hates to be contaminated with the mere picture of victorious evil. Our only chance seems to me to be to maintain, against all appearances, that evil can never and in no way be victorious.

I would that you would tell me whether you only used your terrible *motif* as a good groundwork for a ghastly tale, or whether you meant it to have a moral purpose. But I suppose you won't tell me.

I seem to have lost you so utterly that I can afford to fling truth of the crudest in your face. And yet I love you and think of you daily, and have Dew Smith's portrait of you in front of me.

The suicide end of Dr. Jekyll is too commonplace. Dr. Jekyll ought to have given Mr. Hyde up to justice. This

would have vindicated the sense of human dignity which is so horribly outraged in your book.

Reviewing Sir Leslie Stephen's 'Studies of a Biographer' (second series), the *Literary World*, December 19, 1902, says:

Sir Leslie Stephen.

He is not an out-and-out admirer of Robert Louis Stevenson, and this gives his opinion more value than that of the blind enthusiast who professes to find in this artist of rare but limited powers every quality that goes to the perfecting of the highest romance. If we select a passage in which the criticism is adverse, it is not in order to make our readers think that Mr. Leslie Stephen is insensible to the strong and fascinating qualities of Stevenson's novels, but to show that while he perceives and fully appreciates these, he can still preserve an even judgment:

'I do not think, to speak frankly, that any novelist of power comparable to his has created so few living and attractive characters. Mr. Sidney Colvin confesses to having been for a time blinded to the imaginative force of "The Ebb-Tide" by his dislike to the three wretched heroes. One is deservedly shot, and the two others, credited with some redeeming points, lose whatever interest they possessed when they accept conversion to avoid death from a missionary's revolver. However vivid the scenery, I cannot follow the fate of such wretches with a pretence of sympathy. There is a similar drawback about the "Master of Ballantrae." The younger brother, who is blackmailed by the utterly reprobate Master, ought surely to be interesting instead of being simply sullen and dogged. In the later adventures we are invited to forgive him on the ground that his brain has been affected; but the impression upon me is that he is sacrificed throughout to the interests of the story. He is cramped in character because a man of any real strength would have broken the meshes upon which the adventure depends. The curious exclusion of women is natural in the purely boyish stories, since to a boy woman is simply an incumbrance upon reasonable modes of life. When in "Catriona" Stevenson introduces a love-story, it is still unsatisfactory because David

Balfour is so much of the undeveloped animal that his passion is clumsy, and his charm for the girl unintelligible. I cannot feel, to say the truth, that in any of these stories I am really living among human beings with whom, apart from their adventures, I can feel any very lively affection or antipathy.'

Many will agree with this estimate of Stevenson's literary limitations. Yet the author is fully sensible of the immense energy and courage of the man, of his extraordinary youthfulness, and of the chivalry which made him so beloved among his friends. Here is a passage which sets forth his appreciation of the physically frail, but spiritually ardent nature of the novelist:

'The philosophy is the man. It is the development of the old boyish sentiment. Disease and trouble might do their worst; the career of the "pirate," or even more creditable forms of the adventurous, might be impracticable; but at least he could meet life gallantly, find inexhaustible interest even in trifling occupations when thrown upon his back by ill-health, and cheer himself against temptations to pessimistic melancholy by sympathy with every human being who showed a touch of the heroic spirit. His essay upon the old "Admirals" is characteristic. His heart goes out to Nelson, with his "peerage or Westminster Abbey," and even more to the four marines of the *Wager*, abandoned of necessity to a certain death, but who yet, as they watched their comrades pulling away, gave three cheers and cried, "God bless the King!" In "*Æs triplex*" he gives the same moral with a closer application to himself:

'"It is best [he says] to begin your folio; even if the doctor does not give you a year, even if he hesitates about a month, make one brave push, see what can be finished in a week. . . . All who have meant good work with their whole heart have done good work, although they may die before they have the time to sign it. . . . Life goes down with a better grace foaming in full tide over a precipice, than miserably struggling to an end in sandy deltas."

'That, he explains, is the true meaning of the saying about those whom the gods love. At whatever age death may come, the man who does so dies young.'

'Robert Louis Stevenson' is one of the subjects on which Mr. J. M. Barrie writes in 'An Edinburgh Eleven,' published six years before the death of the romancer. The author of 'A Window in Thrums,' though always a whole-hearted admirer of his great contemporary and countryman, was far from blind to his failings at that time, and writes very frankly of Stevenson's 'going-to-do' condition. His essay was a plea for 'the great book he is going to write by-and-by when the little books are finished':

J. M. Barrie. I.

The keynote of all Mr. Stevenson's writings is his indifference, so far as his books are concerned, to the affairs of life and death on which other minds are chiefly set. Whether man has an immortal soul interests him as an artist not a whit: what is to come of man troubles him as little as where man came from. He is a warm, genial writer, yet this is so strange as to seem inhuman. His philosophy is that we are but as the light-hearted birds. This is our moment of being; let us play the intoxicating game of life beautifully, artistically, before we fall dead from the tree. We all know it is only in his books that Mr. Stevenson can live this life. The cry is to arms; spears glisten in the sun; see the brave bark riding joyously on the waves, the black flag, the dash of red colour twisting round a mountain-side. Alas! the drummer lies on a couch beating his drum. It is a pathetic picture, less true to fact now, one rejoices to know, than it was recently. A common theory is that Mr. Stevenson dreams an ideal life to escape from his own sufferings. This sentimental plea suits very well. The noticeable thing, however, is that the grotesque, the uncanny, holds his soul; his brain will only follow a coloured clue. The result is that he is chiefly picturesque, and to those who want more than art for art's sake, never satisfying. Fascinating as his verses are, artless in the perfection of art, they take no reader a step forward. The children of whom he sings so sweetly are cherubs without souls. . . .

Some think Mr. Stevenson's essays equal to Lamb's, or greater. To that I say No. The name of Lamb will for many a year bring proud tears to English eyes. Here was a man,

weak like the rest of us, who kept his sorrows to himself. Life to him was not among the trees. He had loved and lost. Grief laid a heavy hand on his brave brow. Dark were his nights; horrid shadows in the house; sudden terrors; the heart stops beating waiting for a footstep. At that door comes Tragedy, knocking at all hours. Was Lamb dismayed? The tragedy of his life was not drear to him. It was wound round those who were dearest to him; it let him know that life has a glory even at its saddest, that humour and pathos clasp hands, that loved ones are drawn nearer, and the soul strengthened in the presence of anguish, pain, and death. When Lamb sat down to write he did not pull down his blind on all that is greatest, if most awful, in human life. He was gentle, kindly; but he did not play at pretending that there is no cemetery round the corner. In Mr. Stevenson's exquisite essays one looks in vain for the great heart that palpitates through the pages of Charles Lamb.

J. M. Barrie. II.

One of the most beautiful chapters in that beautiful book, 'Margaret Ogilvy,' is headed simply 'R. L. S.' Therein Mr. J. M. Barrie describes in his inimitable way how his mother, out of loving jealousy for the fame of her son, used to pretend that she could never 'thole' Stevenson's books—although she had not yet read any of them. By practising many wiles, her son at length beguiled her into an acquaintance with the 'Master of Ballantrae.' She forthwith succumbed to the Master's charm, but her reading of the romance was done covertly, in all sorts of secret ways, to the delight of Mr. Barrie, who writes:

She had come down to sit beside me while I wrote, and sometimes, when I looked up, her eye was not on me, but on the shelf where the 'Master of Ballantrae' stood inviting her. Mr. Stevenson's books are not for the shelf, they are for the hand; even when you lay them down, let it be on the table for the next comer. Being the most sociable that man has penned in our time, they feel very lonely up there in a stately row. I

think their eye is on you the moment you enter the room, and so you are drawn to look at them, and you take a volume down with the impulse that induces one to unchain the dog. And the result is not dissimilar, for in another moment you two are at play. Is there any other modern writer who gets round you in this way? Well, he had given my mother the look which in the ballroom means, 'Ask me for this waltz,' and she ettled to do it, but felt that her more dutiful course was to sit out the dance with this other less entertaining partner. I wrote on doggedly, but could hear the whispering.

'Am I to be a wall-flower?' asked James Durie reproachfully. (It must have been leap-year.)

'Speak lower,' replied my mother, with an uneasy look at me.

'Pooh!' said James contemptuously, 'that kail-runtle!'

'I winna have him miscalled,' said my mother, frowning.

'I am done with him,' said James (wiping his cane with his cambric handkerchief), and his sword clattered deliciously (I cannot think this was accidental), which made my mother sigh. Like the man he was, he followed up his advantage with a comparison that made me dip viciously.

'A prettier sound that,' said he, clanking his sword again, 'than the clack-clack of your young friend's shuttle.'

'Whist!' cried my mother, who had seen me dip.

'Then give me your arm,' said James, lowering his voice.

'I dare not,' answered my mother. 'He's so touchy about you.'

'Come, come,' he pressed her, 'you are certain to do it sooner or later, so why not now?'

'Wait till he has gone for his walk,' said my mother; 'and, forby that, I'm ower old to dance with you.'

'How old are you?' he inquired.

'You're gey and pert!' cried my mother.

'Are you seventy?'

'Off and on,' she admitted.

'Pooh,' he said, 'a mere girl!'

She replied instantly, 'I'm no to be catched with chaff'; but she smiled and rose, as if he had stretched out his hand and got her by the finger-tip.

After that they whispered so low (which they could do as they

were now much nearer each other) that I could catch only one remark. It came from James, and seems to show the tenor of their whisperings, for his words were, 'Easily enough, if you slip me beneath your shawl.'

That is what she did, and furthermore she left the room guiltily, muttering something about redding up the drawers. I suppose I smiled wanly to myself, or conscience must have been nibbling at my mother, for in less than five minutes she was back, carrying her accomplice openly, and she thrust him with positive viciousness into the place where my Stevenson had lost a tooth (as the writer whom he most resembled would have said). And then, like a good mother, she took up one of her son's books and read it most determinedly. It had become a touching incident to me, and I remember how we there and then agreed upon a compromise: she was to read the enticing thing just to convince herself of its inferiority.

'The Master of Ballantrae' is not the best. Conceive the glory, which was my mother's, of knowing from a trustworthy source that there are at least three better awaiting you on the same shelf. She did not know Alan Breck yet, and he was as anxious to step down as Mr. Bally himself. John Silver was there, getting into his leg, so that she should not have to wait a moment, and roaring, 'I 'll lay to that!' when she told me consolingly that she could not thole pirate stories. Not to know these gentlemen, what is it like? It is like never having been in love. But they are in the house! That is like knowing that you will fall in love to-morrow morning. With one word, by drawing one mournful face, I could have got my mother to abjure the jam-shelf—nay, I might have managed it by merely saying that she had enjoyed the 'Master of Ballantrae.' For you must remember that she only read it to persuade herself (and me) of its unworthiness, and that the reason she wanted to read the others was to get further proof. All this she made plain to me, eyeing me a little anxiously the while, and of course I accepted the explanation. Alan is the biggest child of them all, and I doubt not that she thought so, but curiously enough her views of him are among the things I have forgotten. But how enamoured she was of 'Treasure Island,' and how faithful she tried to be to me all the time she was reading it!

The concluding paragraph of Mr. Barrie's delightful chapter must be quoted:

Vailima was the one spot on earth I had any great craving to visit, but . . . in the meantime that happened which put an end for ever to my scheme of travel. I shall never go up the Road of Loving Hearts now, on 'a wonderful clear night of stars,' to meet the man coming toward me on a horse. It is still a wonderful clear night of stars, but the road is empty. So I never saw the dear king of us all. But before he had written books he was in my part of the country with a fishing wand in his hand, and I like to think that I was the boy who met him that day by Queen Margaret's burn, where the rowans are, and busked a fly for him, and stood watching, while his lithe figure rose and fell as he cast and hinted back from the crystal waters of Noran-side.

Mr. Barrie's Speech at Edinburgh.

Mr. J. M. Barrie's speech at the memorial meeting in Edinburgh would seem to have been the most attractive feature of the gathering, even with Lord Rosebery in the chair. One of the many correspondents who described the scene states that the greatest applause was reserved for the author of 'A Window in Thrums.' His speech does not lend itself to reproduction as a whole, but the following passages should be included here:

Louis Stevenson was loved far more than any other writer of his time. One or two of his contemporaries no doubt were greater than he, but those of them who were Stevensonians—a form of Freemasonry—those who made almost an idol of the man, were quite willing to admit his imperfections, and so he was only human. But they had read in novels that when a man was really in love he hated to have his lady make an idol and worship it. He wanted her to know him as he really was. He told her all that was to be told against himself—what his failings were—and said to her that now she could not love him so much. Then he turned upon her in a passion when she admitted that she did not. That was how they regarded Louis

Stevenson. They knew he had his imperfections, but they were all willing to turn themselves into Alan Brecks and become braw fighters. There was only one other novelist of modern times who had called forth such a passion of devotion—a woman, a darker spirit than he, one who died at a very much younger age than he, the author of 'Wuthering Heights.' He thought every one who had come under the spell of Robert Louis Stevenson or Emily Brontë would fight for them till he dropped. It was no single class that loved Stevenson. All classes did. . . .

It had been said that he cared little about his old university in Edinburgh, but this was not true. The other day he had heard of a letter Stevenson had written to one of his oldest friends. It was written from the South Seas. He said he was in a boat as he wrote, and while he had been lying there he had been thinking of his old days at Edinburgh University, the dreams he had dreamt in those days, and how little he had thought at that time that they would be realised now; and now they had been realised, and it had occurred to him that out of gratitude he might have put at the corner of Lothian Street a tablet in which that little story might be inscribed, so that students who had grown down-hearted might perchance look up and be cheered. He (Mr. Barrie) did not know whether that tablet would ever be put up, but he dared say many students would seem to see it there, and would take comfort. He knew another body of young men—younger men a little than Mr. Stevenson at all events—who took him as their model, who looked up to him as their example—he meant the younger writers of to-day of all classes, not merely the romancers, the realists as they were called, the idealists as they were called, the pessimists as they were called—they all saw with different eyes, but they were all agreed that Stevenson, beyond all other writers of his time, was the man who showed them how to put their houses in order before they began to write, and in what spirit they should write, and with what aim, and with what clean tools, and with what honesty of toil. They knew from him that however poor their books might be they were not disgraced if they had done their best, and, however popular, if they were not written with some of his aims they were only cumberers of the

ground. They were only soldiers in the ranks, but they were proud to claim him as their leader, and when he called his muster-roll they would hear them all answer to their names, 'Here, here, here.' He was dead, but he still carried their flag, and because of him the most worthy of us were more worthy, and the meanest of us were a little less mean.

Lord Rosebery.

The Earl of Rosebery presided over the great meeting held in the Music Hall, Edinburgh, on December 10, 1896, to consider the question of a public memorial to Robert Louis Stevenson. The project had originated in a letter written to the press by Lord Rosebery, who in the course of his speech paid this graceful tribute to the memory of his fellow-countryman (the report used is that of the *Daily News*):

How then, can I, in her[1] presence, and in the presence of those friends who knew him so well, pretend to take a prominent part on this occasion? My part was a perfectly simple one. I wrote to the papers a genuine inquiry. I could not but believe that in this age of memorials and testimonials some stone or cairn had been put up to the memory of Robert Louis Stevenson. I should have been confident that such a memorial had been put up but for one trifling, though capital, circumstance—I had never been asked for a subscription; and therefore I came to the conclusion that there were grave doubts as to whether any such movement had taken place.

To-day is not the moment—we have not the time, and it would require a literary capacity to which I make no pretence—to-day is not the opportunity to enter into any review of the works of Stevenson. But there are two or three points to which, as an outside reader, I must call your attention before I sit down. The first is the style of the man himself—it was a tool carefully finished and prepared by himself in order the better to work out the business to which his genius led him. I dare say many of you may think that style is a light, accidental art of inspiration

[1] The reference is to Stevenson's mother, who with difficulty managed to get into the crowded meeting.

which comes easily to a gifted writer. But what does Stevenson say himself? 'Whenever a book or a passage particularly pleased me, in which a thing was said or an effect rendered with propriety, in which there was either some conspicuous force or some happy distinction in the style, I must sit down at once and set myself to ape that quality. I was unsuccessful, and I knew it; and tried again, and was again unsuccessful, and always unsuccessful. But at least in these vain bouts I got some practice in rhythm, in harmony, in construction, and in the co-ordination of parts. I have thus played the sedulous ape to Hazlitt, to Lamb, to Wordsworth, to Sir Thomas Browne, to Defoe, to Hawthorne, to Montaigne, to Baudelaire, and to Obermann.' And to these he adds afterwards, in a later passage, Ruskin, Browning, Morris, Keats, Swinburne, Chaucer, Webster, Congreve, and Thackeray; and he sums it all up by saying, '*that*, like it or not, is the way to write.' If a dullard were to pursue that practice which Stevenson enjoins, he would at the end of it be probably only, as at the beginning, a 'sedulous ape.' But with Stevenson there was the genius to mould what he had acquired by this painful practice. Mr. Fox said of Mr. Pitt that he himself (Mr. Fox) had always a command of words, but that Mr. Pitt had always a command of the right words; and that is a quality which strikes us so in the style of Stevenson.

I do not know whether his method was easy or laborious. I strongly suspect it may have been laborious; but, which ever it was, he never was satisfied with any word which did not fully embody the idea that he had in his mind, and therefore you have in his style something suggestive, something musical, something pregnant, a splendid vehicle for whatever he had to say. He was not satisfied with style; he infused into his style a spirit which, for want of a better word, I can only call a spirit of irony of the most exquisite kind. He, as you know, adopted a style of diction which reminds us sometimes more of Addison's *Spectator* or Steele's *Tatler* than of the easier and more emotional language of these later days. But as he put into these dignified sentences this spirit which, for want of a better word, I must call irony, he relieved what otherwise might have been heavy. Now, I think you will all recognise what I mean when I speak of this spirit of irony. You will find it in, I think, every page of his

works. I do not mean that of the savage and gruesome parable which has added a household word to the English language, and which is called 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,' or 'Mr. Hyde and Dr. Jekyll'; but I will take one instance from one of the works of his highest imagination, 'The New Arabian Nights.' He takes Rudolf out of 'The Mysteries of Paris' and puts him down in London as a plump and respectable Prince of Bohemia, bent on adventure, but comfortably situated, hovering always between the sublime and the ridiculous, till the author at last makes up his mind for the ridiculous and settles him down in a cigar divan. But no one can read the account of Florizel, Prince of Bohemia, without recognising the essential quality of irony which makes Stevenson's style so potent. In some of his books he develops an even more bitter power of the same kind. In 'The Dynamiter', you will find that in a form sometimes in which neither Swift nor Thackeray could have excelled. The picture of the scheming dynamiter, full of the high impulse of his mission, and constantly baffled by the cruel fate of circumstances in his efforts for an exhaustive explosion, is perhaps one of the most powerful instances of sardonic treatment to be met with in the whole history of English literature.

There are two places in the world where Stevenson might fitly be commemorated: one is Edinburgh, and one is Samoa. I suppose that in Samoa some sort of memorial is sure to be raised. But, gathering as I do Stevenson's tastes only from a perusal of his works, there seem to me to have been two passions in his life—one for Scotland—and in Scotland for Edinburgh—and one for the sea. It seems to me that, if some memorial could be raised which should appeal to the passion both for Edinburgh and the sea, we should have done the best thing in carrying out what might have been his wishes in such a connection. But whether that be so or not, of one thing I am certain,—than none of us here, if I may judge from the crowding of this hall and the attitude of this audience, are willing that the time shall pass without some adequate memorial being raised. That is, after all, the materially important point for which we are met—that we should not go down to posterity as a generation that was unaware of the treasure in our midst; and I trust that before long it will be our happiness in Edinburgh to see some

memorial of Robert Louis Stevenson which shall add to the historical interest of our city and to the many shrines of learning and of genius by which it is adorned.

Sir Conan Doyle.

Dr. A. Conan Doyle (to give him the title he bore at that time), in a careful and finely written essay, published in the *National Review*, January 1890, examined with considerable detail 'Mr. Stevenson's Methods in Fiction.' At the outset he spoke of the difficulty of contemporary criticism so far as defining a genuine masterpiece of literature was concerned.. But quoting Stevenson's playful remark from the preface of 'Prince Otto,' 'I still purpose by hook or crook, this book or the next, to launch a masterpiece,' Dr. Doyle goes on with fortitude to declare that in 'The Pavilion on the Links' Stevenson had already achieved that worthy ambition:

> 'The Pavilion on the Links' marks the high-water mark of his genius, and is enough in itself, without another line, to give a man a permanent place among the great story-tellers of the race. Mr. Stevenson's style is always most pure, and his imagination is usually vivid, but in this one tale the very happiest use of words is wedded to the most thrilling, most concentrated interest. It would be difficult to name any tale of equal length in which four characters, those of Northmour, Cassilis, the absconding banker and his daughter, stand out so strongly and so clearly—the more Titanic for the lurid background against which they move.

Dr. Doyle also specifies 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' as a masterpiece which will stand almost any test, but thinks that the stories of the three series of 'The New Arabian Nights' are very unequal, many being 'slight and inconsequent to an exasperating extent.'

Proceeding to discuss the radical difference between the art of writing a good novel and that of writing a first-class short tale, he sets it down as 'a very rare thing to find an author who can excel in either art; as rare, probably, as

to find a sculptor who could cut a first-rate cameo, and yet was equally expert at hewing out Titanic groups of figures':

Now Mr. Stevenson has done this. He can claim to have mastered the whole gamut of fiction. His short stories are good, and his long ones are good. On the whole, however, the short ones are the more characteristic, and the more certain to retain their position in English literature. The shorter effort suits his genius. With some choice authors, as with some rare vintages, a sip gives the real flavour better than a draught. It is eminently so with Mr. Stevenson. His novels have all conspicuous virtues, but they have usually some flaw, some drawback, which may weaken their permanent value. In the tales, or at least in the best of the tales, the virtues are as conspicuous as ever, but the flaws have disappeared. The merits of his short stories are more readily assessed, too, as his serious rivals in that field are few indeed. Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Stevenson: those are the three, put them in what order you will, who are the greatest exponents of the short story in our language.

In 'Prince Otto' Dr. Doyle finds Stevenson 'strongly under the influence of George Meredith,' but he proceeds:

A very singular mental reaction took Mr. Stevenson from one pole to the other of imaginative work, from the subtle, dainty lines of 'Prince Otto' to the direct, matter-of-fact, eminently practical and Defoe-like narratives of 'Treasure Island' and of 'Kidnapped.' Both are admirable pieces of English, well conceived, well told, striking the reader at every turn with some novel situation, some new combination of words which just fits the sense as a cap fits a nipple. 'Treasure Island' is perhaps the better story, while 'Kidnapped' may have the longer lease of life as being an excellent and graphic sketch of the state of the Highlands after the last Jacobite insurrection. Each contains one novel and admirable character, Alan Breck in the one, and Long John in the other. Surely John Silver, with his face the size of a ham, and his little gleaming eyes like crumbs of glass in the centre of it, is the king of all seafaring desperadoes.

Observe how the strong effect is produced in his case, seldom by direct assertion on the part of the story-teller, but usually by comparison, innuendo, or indirect reference. The objectionable Billy Bones is haunted by the dread of 'a seafaring man with one leg.' Captain Flint, we are told, was a brave man: 'He was afraid of none, not he, only Silver—*Silver was that genteel.*' Or again, where John himself says, 'There was some that was feared of Pew, and some that was feared of Flint; but Flint his own self was feared of me. Feared he was and proud. They was the roughest crew afloat, was Flint's. The devil himself would have been feared to go to sea with them. Well, now, I tell you, I'm not a boasting man, and you seen yourself how easy I keep company; but when I was quartermaster, *lambs* wasn't the word for Flint's old buccaneers.' So by a touch here and a hint there, there grows upon us the individuality of this smooth-tongued, ruthless, masterful, one-legged devil. He is to us not a creation of fiction, but an organic living reality with whom we have come into contact; such is the effect of the fine suggestive strokes with which he is drawn.

The lack of female interest in these books is pointed out, of course, and while Dr. Doyle can still discern in them 'a touch of the Meredithian manner,' he confesses that we cannot help regarding them as 'an apotheosis of the boy's story—the penny number of our youth *in excelsis*.' He is one of those, however, who admire Stevenson for the very fact of the paucity of his love interest, and regards him as the father of 'the modern masculine novel.' 'In British fiction,' says Dr. Doyle, 'nine books out of ten have held up love and marriage as the be-all and end-all of life. Yet we know, in actual practice, that this is not so.' Of 'The Master of Ballantrae,' he remarks: 'It aims high, and falls very little short of the point aimed at. It may, perhaps, be less graphic than "Kidnapped," and lack the continuous stir of "Treasure Island," but it is broader in its scope, and freer in its handling than either of its predecessors. It contains one carefully elaborated and delicately drawn female figure in Alison Graeme,

whose whole character, in its length and in its perversity, is admirably natural and original. The male characters, too, are a stronger group than he has ever before brought together.'

With the experienced eye of the practised novelist, Dr. Doyle points out one of Stevenson's greatest qualities as a master of fiction, and curiously enough one which his appreciative critics have seldom signalised:

Mr. Stevenson, like one of his own characters, has an excellent gift of silence. He invariably sticks to his story, and is not to be diverted off to discourse upon views of life or theories of the universe. A story-teller's business is to tell his story. If he wishes to air his views upon other matters he can embody them in small independent works, as Mr. Stevenson has done. Where a character gives vent to opinions which throw a light upon his own individuality, that is a different thing, but it is surely intolerable that an author should stop the action of his story to give his own private views upon things in general. Unfortunately, our greatest authors are the worst sinners in this respect. What would be thought of a dramatist who brought his piece to a standstill, while he came in person to the footlights and discoursed upon social inequality or the nebular hypothesis? Mr. Stevenson is too true an artist to fall into this error, with the result that he never loses his hold upon his reader's attention. He has shown that a man may be terse and plain, and yet free himself from all suspicion of being shallow and superficial. No man has a more marked individuality, and yet no man effaces himself more completely when he sets himself to tell a tale.

The methods of Stevenson's prose style are next considered by Dr. Doyle, and many illustrative passages quoted. 'The use of novel and piquant forms of speech is one of the most obvious of his devices,' he says, and 'next in order is his extraordinary faculty for the use of pithy similes, which arrest the attention and stimulate the imagination.' His last word on this side of Stevenson's craftsmanship is:

After all, however, the main characteristic of Stevenson is his

curious instinct for saying in the briefest space just those few words which stamp the impression upon the reader's mind. He will make you see a thing more clearly than you would probably have done had your eyes actually rested upon it.

S. R. Crockett.—I.

Mr. S. R. Crockett, for whose Scots stories Stevenson had a warm admiration, had written a paper on the 'Edinburgh Edition'—only one volume of which appeared before Stevenson's death—and this was designed for the *Bookman*, January 1895. But before the magazine was ready for press, R. L. S. had crossed the bar. Mr. Crockett 'tried and failed to revise it in the gloom of the night that came so swiftly to those who loved him.' Thus the article was printed as it originally stood, prefaced by an introduction, from which this paragraph should be quoted as evidence of Stevenson's unfailing interest and sympathy in his fellows of the pen:

It is true also that I have small right to speak of him. I was little to him; but then he was very much to me. He alone of mankind saw what pleased him in a little book of boyish verses.

Seven years ago he wrote to tell me so. He had a habit of quoting stray lines from it in successive letters to let me see that he remembered what he had praised. Yet he was ever as modest and brotherly as if I had been the great author and he the lad writing love-verses to his sweetheart.

The following paragraphs are selected from the article:

To me the most interesting thing in Mr. Stevenson's books is always Mr. Stevenson himself. Some authors (perhaps the greatest) severely sit with the more ancient gods, and serenely keep themselves out of their books. Most of these authors are dead now. Others put their personalities in, indeed; but would do much better to keep them out. Their futilities and pomposities, pose as they may, are no more interesting than those of the chairman of a prosperous limited company. But there are a

chosen few who cannot light a cigarette or part their hair in a new place without being interesting. Upon such in this life interviewers bear down in shoals with pencils pointed like spears; and about them as soon as they are dead—lo! begins at once the 'chatter about Harriet.'

Mr. Stevenson is of this company. Rarest of all, his friends have loved and praised him so judiciously that he has no enemies. He might have been the spoiled child of letters. He is only 'all the world's Louis.' 'The one unforgivable thing in a checkered past is that at one time he wore a black shirt, to which we refuse to be reconciled on any terms.

But when he writes of himself, how supremely excellent is the reading. It is good even when he does it intentionally, as in 'Memories and Portraits.' It is better still when he sings it, as in his 'Child's Garden.' He is irresistible to every lonely child who reads and thrills, and reads again to find his past recovered for him with effortless ease. It is a book never long out of my hands, for only in it and in my dreams, when I am touched with fever, do I grasp the long, long thoughts of a lonely child and a hill-wandering boy—thoughts I never told to any; yet which Mr. Stevenson tells over again to me as if he read them off a printed page. . . .

Mr. Stevenson writes the fascination of his personality into all his most attractive creations, and whenever I miss the incarnation, I miss most of the magic as well. Jim Hawkins is only 'the Lantern-Bearer' of North Berwick links translated into the language of adventure on the high seas—the healthier also for the change. I love Jim Hawkins. On my soul I love him more even than Alan Breck. He is the boy we should all like to have been, though no doubt David Balfour is much more like the boys we were—without the piety and the adventures. I read Stevenson in every line of 'Treasure Island.' It is of course mixed of Erraid and the island discovered by Mr. Daniel Defoe. But we love anything of such excellent breed, and the crossing only improves it. Our hearts dance when Mr. Stevenson lands his cut-throats, with one part of himself as hero and the other as villain. John Silver is an admirable villain, for he is just the author genially cutting throats. Even when he pants three times as he sends the knife home, we do

not entirely believe in his villainy. We expect to see the murdered seaman about again and hearty at his meals in the course of a chapter or two. John is a villain at great expense and trouble to himself; but we like him personally, and are prepared to sit down and suck an apple with him, even when he threatens to stove in our 'thundering old blockhouse, and them as dies will be the lucky ones.' In our hearts we think the captain was a little hard on him. We know that it is Mr. Stevenson all the time, and are terrified exactly like a three-year-old who sees his father take a rug over his head and 'be a bear.' The thrill is delicious, for there is just an off chance that after all the thing may turn out to be a bear; but still we are pretty easy that at the play's end the bearskin will be tossed aside, the villain repent, and John Silver get off with a comfortable tale of pieces of eight.

No book has charted more authentically the topographical features of the kingdom of Romance than 'Treasure Island.' Is that island in the South or in the North Atlantic? Is it in the 'Spanish main'? What *is* the Spanish main? Is it in the Atlantic at all? Or is it a jewel somewhere in the wide Pacific, or strung on some fringe of the Indian Ocean? Who knows or cares? Jim Hawkins is there. His luck, it is true, is something remarkable. His chances are phenomenal. His imagination, like ours, is running free, and we could go on for ever hearing about Jim. We can trust Jim Hawkins, and void of care we follow his star. . . .

Again, Alan Breck is ever Alan, and bright shines his sword; but he is never quite Jim Hawkins to me. Nor does he seem even so point-device in 'Catriona' as he was in the round-house or with his foot on the heather. But wherever Alan Breck goes or David Balfour follows, thither I am ready to fare forth, unquestioning and all-believing.

Five years after penning the above, Mr. S. R. Crockett again wrote in the *Bookman* (London), December 1899, the following deeply interesting paper on the two volumes of Stevenson's 'Letters' which had been published just then:

Out of these noble volumes of Stevenson letters two things come to me of new, of which the first is the more important. Before and above all else, these books (with their appendage, the Vailima correspondence) are the record of as noble a friendship as I know of in letters. And perhaps, as following from this, we have here a Stevenson without shadows. Not even a full statue, but rather a medallion in low relief—as it were, the St. Gaudens bust done into printer's ink.

S. R. Crockett.—II.

It is difficult to say precisely what one feels, with Mr. Colvin (and long may he be spared) still in the midst of us. And yet I cannot help putting it on record that what impresses me most in these volumes, wherein are so many things lovely and of good report, is the way in which, in order that one friend may shine like a city set on a hill, the other friend consistently retires himself into deepest shade. Yet all the same Mr. Colvin is ever on the spot. You can trace him on every page—emergent only when an explanation must be made, never saying a word too much, obviously in possession of all the facts, but desirous of no reward or fame or glory to himself if only Tusitala continue to shine the first among his peers. Truly there is a love not perhaps *sur*passing the love of women, but certainly *passing* it, in that it is different in kind and degree.

Obviously, however, Mr. Colvin often wounded with the faithful wounds of a friend, and sometimes in return he was blessed, and sometimes he was banned. But always the next letter made it all right.

To those outside of his family and familiars, Stevenson was always a charming and sometimes a regular correspondent. To myself, with no claim upon him save that of a certain instinctive mutual liking, he wrote with the utmost punctuality every two months from 1888 to the week of his death.

It is the irony of fate that about thirty of these letters lie buried somewhere beneath, above, or behind an impenetrable barrier of twenty-five thousand books. In a certain great 'flitting' conducted by village workmen, these manuscripts disappeared, and have so far eluded all research. But at the next upturning of the Universe, I doubt not they will come to light and be available for Mr. Colvin's twentieth

edition. It was a great grief to me that I had no more to contribute besides those few but precious documents which appear in their places in the second volume of 'Letters to Family and Friends.'

Albeit, in spite of every such blank, here is such richness as has not been in any man's correspondence since Horace Walpole's—yet never, like his, acidly-based, never razor-edged; never, for all Stevenson's Edinburgh extraction, either west-endy or east-windy. Here in brief are two books, solid, sane, packed with wit and kindliness, and filled full of the very height of living.

Not all of Stevenson is here—it seems to me, not even the greater part of Stevenson. Considered from one point of view, there is more of the depths of the real Stevenson in a single chapter of Miss Eve Simpson's 'Edinburgh Days,' especially in the chapter entitled 'Life at Twenty-five,' than in any of these seven hundred and fifty fair pages. But with such a friend as Mr. Colvin this was inevitable. He has carried out that finest of the maxims of amity, 'Censure your friend in private, praise him in public!' And, indeed, if ever man deserved to be praised, it was Stevenson. So generous was he, so ready to be pleased with other men's matters, so hard to satisfy with his own, a child among children, a man among men, a king among princes. Yet, all the same, anything of the nature of a play stirred him to the shoe soles, down to that last tragic bowl of salad and bottle of old Burgundy on the night before he died. He was a fairy prince and a peasant boy in one. Aladdin with an old lamp under his arm always ready to be rubbed, while outside his window Jack's beanstalk went clambering heavenward a foot every five minutes.

All the same, it gives one a heartache—even those of us who knew him least—to think that no more of these wide sheets, close written and many times folded, will ever come to us through the post. And what the want must be to those who knew him longer and better, to Mr. Colvin, Mr. Gosse, Mr. Henley, only they know.

For myself, I am grateful for every word set down here. It is all sweet, and true, and gracious. The heaven seems kinder to the earth while we read, and in the new portrait Tusitala's large

dark eyes gleam at us from beneath the penthouse of his brows with a gipsy-like and transitory suggestion.

'The Sprite,' some one called him. And it was a true word. For here he had no continuing city. Doubtless, though, he lightens some Farther Lands with his bright wit, and such ministering spirits as he may cross on his journeying are finding him good company. *Talofa, Tusitala;* do not go very far away. We too would follow you down the 'Road of Loving Hearts.'

Mr. S. R. Crockett dedicates 'The Stickit Minister's Wooing,' published in 1900, to 'the well-beloved memory of R. L. S.' In a notable preface, headed 'A Look Behind —and Forward,' Mr. Crockett writes:

S. R. Crockett.—III.

Mr. Stevenson and I had been in occasional communication since about the year 1886, when, in a small volume of verse issued during the early part of that year, the fragment of a 'Transcript from the Song of Songs, which is Solomon's,' chanced to attract his attention. He wrote immediately, with that beautiful natural generosity of appreciation of his, to ask the author to finish his translation in verse, and to proceed to other dramatic passages, some of which, chiefly from Isaiah and Job, he specified. I remember that 'When the morning stars sang together' was one of those indicated, and 'O, thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted,' another. 'I have tried my hand at them myself,' he added kindly; 'but they were not so good as your Shulamite.'

After this he made me more than once the channel of his practical charity to certain poor miner-folk, whom disaster had rendered homeless and penniless on the outskirts of his beloved Glencorse.

A year or two afterwards, having in the intervals of other work written down certain countryside stories, which managed to struggle into print in rather obscure corners, I collected these into a volume, under the title of 'The Stickit Minister and Some Common Men.' Then after the volume was through the

press, in a sudden gulp of venturesomeness I penned a dedication.

TO

Robert Louis Stevenson

OF SCOTLAND AND SAMOA,

I DEDICATE THESE STORIES OF THAT

GREY GALLOWAY LAND

WHERE

ABOUT THE GRAVES OF THE MARTYRS

THE WHAUPS ARE CRYING—

HIS HEART REMEMBERS HOW.

Still much fearing and trembling, how needlessly I guessed not then, I packed up and despatched a copy to Samoa. Whereupon, after due interval, there came back to these shores a letter—the sense of which reached me deviously—not to myself but to his friend, Mr. Sidney Colvin. 'If I could only be buried in the hills, under the heather, and a table tombstone like the martyrs; "where the whaups and plovers are crying!" Did you see a man who wrote "The Stickit Minister," and dedicated it to me, in words that brought the tears to my eyes every time I looked at them? "Where about the graves of the martyrs the whaups are crying—his heart remembers how." Ah, by God, it does! Singular that I should fulfil the Scots destiny throughout, and live a voluntary exile and have my head filled with the blessed, beastly place all the time!' . . .

Curiously enough, it was not from Samoa, but from Honolulu, that I first received tidings that my little volume had not miscarried. It was quite characteristic of Mr. Stevenson not to answer at once: 'I let my letters accumulate till I am leaving a place,' he said to me more than once; 'then I lock myself in with them, and my cries of penitence can be heard a mile!'

In a San Francisco paper there appeared a report of a speech he had made to some kindly Scots who entertained him in Honolulu. In it he spoke affectionately of 'The Stickit Minister.' I have, alas! lost the reference now, but at the time it took me by the throat. I could not get over the sheer kindness of the thing.

Then came a letter and a poem, both very precious to me: 'Thank you from my heart, and see with what dull pedantry I have been tempted to extend your beautiful phrase of prose into three indifferent stanzas:

'Blows the wind to-day, and the sun and the rain are flying;
Blows the wind on the moors to-day and now,
Where about the graves of the martyrs the whaups are crying—
My heart remembers how!

Grey recumbent tombs of the dead in desert places,
Standing Stones on the vacant wine-red moor;
Hills of sheep, and the howes of the silent vanished races,
And winds austere and pure!

Be it granted me to behold you again in dying,
Hills of home! and to hear again the call—
Hear about the graves of the martyrs the pee-wees crying,
And hear no more at all!'

To me, in the all too brief days that remained to him, he wrote letter after letter of criticism, encouragement, and praise (in which last, as was his wont, he let his kind heart run far ahead of his judgment). It goes to my heart now not to quote from these, for they are in some wise my poor patent of nobility. But, perhaps with more wisdom, I keep them by me, to hearten myself withal when the days of darkness grow too many and too dark.

So much for bush to this second draught of countryside vintage—the more easily forgiven that it tells of the generosity of a dead man whom I loved. But and if in any fields Elysian or grey twilight of shades, I chance to meet with Robert Louis Stevenson, I know that I shall find him in act to help over some ghostly stile the halt, the maimed, and the faint of heart—even as in these late earthly years he did for me—and for many another.

For the *Bookman*, February 1895, 'Ian Maclaren' wrote a little article entitled 'In Memoriam: R. L. S.,' the opening paragraphs of which may be fitly quoted here:

When one came in with omens of sadness on his face and

told us that Stevenson was dead, each man had a sense of personal bereavement. None of us had ever seen him, save one—and that was long ago; none of us had ever read a letter of his writing, save one, and he ransacked his memory for the least word. We had no 'eagle's feather' to show; there was nothing between this man and us save the mystical tie that binds a writer and his readers in the kingdom of letters. He had led us in through the ivory gate, and shown us things eye had not seen; and all his service had been given at a great cost of suffering. Filled with the enthusiasm of his art, he beat back death time after time, and only succumbed, like J. R. Green and Symonds, his brethren in letters and affliction, after he had achieved imperishable fame. '*Monumentum ære perennius.*'

'Ian Maclaren.'

Mr. Stevenson had not to complain, with Sir Thomas More, that readers of books were so 'unkind and ungenial that though they take great pleasure and delectation in the work, yet, for all that, they cannot find in their hearts to love the author thereof'; for though he was exiled from his native land, yet he lived in the heart of every reading man, not only because he was a great writer, but also because he was a good man with faith in God and man.

Mr. David Christie Murray published in 1897 a volume containing a series of literary studies under the general title of 'My Contemporaries in Fiction.' The third of the series was devoted to R. L. Stevenson. Mr. Murray writes:

I have special and private reasons for thinking warmly of Robert Louis Stevenson, the man; and these reasons seem to give me some added warrant for an attempt to do justice to Robert Louis Stevenson, the writer. With the solitary exception of the unfortunate cancelled letters from Samoa, which were written whilst he was in ill-health, and suffered a complete momentary eclipse of style, he has scarcely published a line which may not afford the most captious reader pleasure. With that sole exception he was always an artist in his work, and always showed

David Christie Murray.

himself alive to the finger-tips. He was in constant, conscious search of felicities in expression, and his taste was exquisitely just. His discernment in the use of words kept equal pace with his invention—he knew at once how to be fastidious and daring. It is to be doubted if any writer has laboured with more constancy to enrich and harden the texture of his style, and at the last a page of his was like cloth of gold for purity and solidity.

This is the praise which the future critics of English literature will award him. But in the age of critical hysteria it is not enough to yield a man the palm for his own qualities. With regard to Stevenson our professional guides have gone fairly demented, and it is worth while to make an effort to give him the place he has honestly earned before the inevitable reaction sets in, and unmerited laudations have brought about an unmerited neglect. His life was arduous. His meagre physical means and his fervent spirit were pathetically ill-mated. It was impossible to survey his career without a sympathy which trembled from admiration to pity. Certain, in spite of all precaution, to die young, and in the face of that stern fact genially and unconquerably brave, he exhorted love. Let the whole virtue of this truth be acknowledged, and let it stand in excuse for praises which have been carried beyond the limits of absurdity. It is hard to exercise a sober judgment where the emotions are brought strongly into play. The inevitable tragedy of Stevenson's fate, the unescapable assurance that he would not live to do all which such a spirit in a sounder frame would have done for an art he loved so fondly, the magnetism of his friendship, his downright incapacity for envy, his genuine humility with regard to his own work and reputation, his unboastful and untiring courage, made a profound impression upon many of his contemporaries. It is, perhaps, small wonder if critical opinion were in part moulded by such influences as these. Errors of judgment thus induced are easily condoned. They are at least a million times more respectable than the mendacities of the publisher's tout, or the ecstasies of the rollers of logs and the grinders of axes.

Mr. Murray then proceeds to discuss the folly of com-

paring not only Stevenson but half a dozen writers of the day with Sir Walter Scott. He submits a just and unquestionable estimate of Scott's greatness, and condemns the comparison between Scott and Stevenson as 'absurd and damaging.' He says:

The comparison, which has been urged so often, will not stand a moment's examination. Stevenson is not a great creative artist. He is not an epoch-maker. He cannot be set shoulder to shoulder with any of the giants. It is no defect in him which prompts this protest. Except in the sense in which his example of purity, delicacy, and finish in verbal work will inspire other artists, Stevenson will have no imitators, as original men always have. He has 'done delicious things,' but he has done nothing new. He has with astonishing labour and felicity built a composite style out of the style of every good writer of English. Even in a single page he sometimes reflects many manners. He is the embodiment of the literary as distinguished from the originating intellect. His method is almost perfect, but it is devoid of personality. He says countless things which are the very echo of Sir Walter's epistolary manner. He says things like Lamb, and sometimes they are as good as the original could have made them. He says things like Defoe, like Montaigne, like Rochefoucauld. His bouquet is culled in every garden, and set in leaves which have grown in all forests of literature. He is deft, apt, sprightly, and always sincerely a man. He is just and brave, and essentially a gentleman. He has the right imitative romance, and he can so blend Defoe and Dickens with a something of himself which is almost, but not quite, creative, that he can present you with a blind old Pew or a John Silver. He is a *littérateur* born—and made. A verbal invention is meat and drink to him. There are places where you see him actively in pursuit of one, as when Markheim stops the clock with 'an interjected finger,' or when John Silver's half-shut, cunning, and cruel eye sparkles 'like a crumb of glass.' Stevenson has run across the channel for that crumb, and it is worth the journey.

Stevenson certainly had that share of genius which belongs to the man who can take infinite pains. Add to this a beautiful

personal character, and an almost perfect receptivity. Add again the power of sympathetic realisation in a purely literary sense, and you have the man. Let me make my last addition clear. It is a common habit of his to think as his literary favourites would have thought. He could think like Lamb. He could think like Defoe. He could even fuse two minds in this way, and make, as it were, a composite mind for himself to think with. His intellect was of a rare and delicate sort, and whilst he was essentially a reproducer, he was in no sense an imitator, or even for a single second a plagiarist. He had an alembic of his own which made old things new. His best possession was that very real sense of proportion which was at the root of all his humour. 'Why doesn't God explain these things to a gentleman like me?' There, a profound habitual reverence of mind suddenly encounters with a ludicrous perception of his own momentary self-importance. The two electric opposites meet, and emit that flash of summer lightning.

Stevenson gave rare honour to his work, and the artist who shows his self-respect in that best of ways will always be respected by the world. He has fairly won our affection and esteem, and we give them ungrudgingly. In seeming to belittle him I have taken an ungrateful piece of work in hand. But in the long run a moderately just estimate of a good man's work is of more service to his reputation than a strained laudation can be.

Mr. Israel Zangwill, in a contribution to the *Critic* (New York), February 1895, writes thus of the author whose death had so recently thrown a shadow on the world of letters:

Israel Zangwill.

'Upwards—towards the peaks. Towards the stars. And towards the great silence.' These words might have been prophetic of the end of Stevenson. Thus did they bear him towards his grave on the Samoan mountain-top—upwards, towards the peaks and the stars and the great silence. If a writer is, as Stevenson contended, the writer who writes finely on a broomstick, then we have lost our greatest writer. Nor, since Elia was laid in the

little churchyard at Edmonton, have we had a more lovable figure than the dainty, whimsical essayist who travelled with a donkey in the Cevennes, or discoursed in delicate English 'for lads and virgins.' It was not only weakness of lungs that drove him to Samoa. It was a natural aversion from civilisation. He was, indeed, something of an anarchist, this genial author of 'The Dynamiters'; and 'this business of living in towns,' as he put it, was counter to the vagabond instincts that preferred a sack in the woods to a bed in a grand hotel. He loved savagery, the elemental simplicity of woods and waters, with that passion which it takes the highest culture to develop. And far from the grinding of printing-presses, by reef and palm, he wove his cunning web of magic phrase for the delectation of Princes Street and the Strand. He mistrusted the garnered sciences of the schools, had conceptions of a great open encyclopædia of experience, so that to 'con' the forty-seventh proposition of Euclid and to hear the band play in the gardens were equally studious.

It was this strain of Bohemianism, this pervasive sense of the romantic and the picaresque, that gave him an interest in rogues, set him writing an essay on Villon, and probing in many a creation the psychology of the scoundrel, for whose virtues he had a tender, anxious eye. That women did not cut any figure in his books springs from this same interest in the elemental. Women are not born, but made. They are a social product of infinite complexity and delicacy. For a like reason Stevenson was no interpreter of the modern. His one contribution to fiction in this aspect is his sense of the romantic possibilities lurking beneath the surface prose of great cities: for him London was Babylon in more than the preacher's meaning. He could make-believe that Rupert Street was in Arabia, and that Haroun al Raschid was supping at the Criterion. A child to the end, always playing at 'make-believe,' dying young as those whom the gods love, and as he would have died had he achieved his centenary, he was the natural exponent in literature of the child. His nursery rhymes are literature for men, and his essay, 'The Lantern-Bearers,' his imaginative interpretation of childhood, opens out into a wonderful exposure of the fallacy of 'realistic' fiction. That and 'Pulvis et Umbra' constitute his highest

flights in the emotional essay, for to the lucent graces of the style there is added here an answering dignity of vital matter.

As a rule his essays lack that power of abstract thinking which gives body to Hazlitt's. To think in the abstract was indeed not his *métier*. He saw things in the concrete, through individual images luminously objective. When he went on his 'Inland Voyage' through French by-ways, he had no such reflections as befell the estimable Arthur Young. The wealth of nations is indifferent to him, statistics delight him not, nor sociology neither. The peasant proprietor draws for him no generalisation; he paddles his own canoe and thinks amiably of supper. He meets an impecunious vagrom actor, and all his latest Bohemianism swells in sympathy. The old mummer's cheerfulness reconciles him to life. Stevenson had, indeed, no philosophy of life except that it is worth living, and so he may claim to have avoided the fallacy which *latet in generalibus*. The concrete endures where philosophy fades. The same lack of general conceptions permeates his admirable novels. They are all amplified anecdotes, and all compact of those perils and adventures on which a sickly person naturally broods longingly, and he has set a whole school of disciples (with no such excuse of valetudinarianism) brooding on blood and writing in the reddest of inks. His Scotch romances have been as overpraised by the zealous Scotchmen who cry 'Genius' at the sight of a kilt, and who lose their heads at a waft from the heather, as his other books have been underpraised. The best of all, 'The Master of Ballantrae,' ends in a bog; and where the author aspires to exceptional subtlety of character-drawing, he befogs us or himself altogether. We are so long weighing the brothers Ballantrae in the balance, watching it incline now this way, now that, scrupulously removing a particle of our sympathy from the one brother to the other, to restore it again in the next chapter, that we end with a conception of them as confusing as Mr. Gilbert's description of Hamlet, who was 'idiotically sane with lucid intervals of lunacy.'

Stevenson's *leit-motifs* are few and persistent. A buried treasure; a boy on an island (note how *le bon Dieu* gave him an island to play with and die in); a brave but stockish young man who is ready to risk his life for a lady whose love for him he fails

to perceive (how this patent has been copied!); the companionability of rogues with honest men in their common peril; the fantastic possibilities of the modern—of such is his stock-in-trade. But what wonderful bits of colour in some of his romances! Who can ever forget Alan Breck's match at the pipes, or the auction-scene in 'The Wrecker'? In these later books of adventure Mr. Stevenson tries for a new thing, for which he has had scant credit. He seeks to combine the novel of character with the novel of adventure; to develop character through romantic action, and to bring out your hero at the end of the episode, not the fixed character he was at the beginning, as is the way of adventure books, but a modified creature. This is especially notable in 'The Ebb-Tide,' that marvellous study of the 'Macaberesque.' Still it is his essays and his personality, rather than his novels, that will count with posterity. On the whole, a great provincial writer. Whether he has that inherent grip which makes a man's provinciality the very source of his strength, so that, as with 'The Vicar of Wakefield' and 'The Arabian Nights,' the provincial merges in the universal, only the centuries can show.

A. T. Quiller-Couch.

Mr. A. T. Quiller-Couch ('Q.') was writing a weekly causerie in the *Speaker* at the time of Stevenson's death, and in the issue of December 22, 1894, his article took the shape of an 'In Memoriam' tribute to the author whose unexpected end had just been reported in a brief cablegram. The article is reprinted in Mr. Quiller-Couch's book, 'Adventures in Criticism,' from which we quote. He begins by mentioning the sense of personal loss which came home to the hearts of Stevenson's fellow-workers in the field of letters at news of his death, and goes on to say:

While he lived, he moved men to put their utmost even into writings that quite certainly would never meet his eye. Surely another age will wonder over this curiosity of letters—that for five years the needle of literary endeavour in Great Britain has

quivered towards a little island in the South Pacific, as to its magnetic pole.

Yet he founded no school, though most of us from time to time have poorly tried to copy him. He remained altogether inimitable, yet never seemed conscious of his greatness. It was native of him to rejoice in the successes of other men at least as much as in his own triumphs. One almost felt that, so long as good books were written, it was no great concern to him whether he or others wrote them. Born with an artist's craving for beauty of expression, he achieved that beauty with infinite pains. Confident in romance and in the beneficence of joy, he cherished the flame of joyous romance with more than Vestal fervour, and kept it ardent in a body which Nature, unkind from the beginning, seemed to delight in visiting with more unkindness—a 'soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed' almost from birth. And his books leave the impression that he did this chiefly from a sense of duty: that he laboured and kept the lamp alight chiefly because, for the time, other and stronger men did not.

Had there been another Scott, another Dumas—if I may change the image—to take up the torch of romance and run with it, I doubt if Stevenson would have offered himself. I almost think in that case he would have consigned with Nature and sat at ease, content to read of new Ivanhoes and new D'Artagnans: for—let it be said again—no man had less of the ignoble itch for merely personal success. Think, too, of what the struggle meant for him: how it drove him unquiet about the world, if somewhere he might meet with a climate to repair the constant drain upon his vitality; and how at last it flung him, as by a 'sudden freshet,' upon Samoa—to die 'far from Argos, dear land of home.'

And then consider the brave spirit that carried him—the last of a great race—along this far and difficult path; for it is the man we must consider now, not, for the moment, his writings. Fielding's voyage to Lisbon was long and tedious enough; but almost the whole of Stevenson's life has been a voyage to Lisbon, a voyage in the very penumbra of death. Yet Stevenson spoke always as gallantly as his great predecessor. Their 'cheerful stoicism,' which allies his books with the best British breeding, will keep them classical as long as our nation shall value

breeding. It shines to our dim eyes now, as we turn over the familiar pages of 'Virginibus Puerisque,' and from page after page —in sentences and fragments of sentences—'It is not altogether ill with the invalid after all.' . . . 'Who would project a serial novel after Thackeray and Dickens had each fallen in mid-course?' [*He* had two books at least in hand and uncompleted, the papers say.] 'Who would find heart enough to begin to live, if he dallied with the consideration of death?' . . . 'What sorry and pitiful quibbling all this is!' . . . 'It is better to live and be done with it, than to die daily in the sick-room. By all means, begin your folio; even if the doctor does not give you a year, even if he hesitates over a month, make one brave push and see what can be accomplished in a week. . . . For surely, at whatever age it overtake the man, this is to die young. . . . The noise of the mallet and chisel is scarcely quenched, the trumpets are hardly done blowing, when, trailing with him clouds of glory, this happy-starred, full-blooded spirit shoots into the spiritual land.'

As it was in 'Virginibus Puerisque,' so is it in the last essay in his last book of essays: 'And the Kingdom of Heaven is of the child-like, of those who are easy to please, who love and who give pleasure. Mighty men of their hands, the smiters, and the builders, and the judges, have lived long and done sternly, and yet preserved this lovely character; and among our carpet interests and twopenny concerns, the shame were indelible if *we* should lose it. *Gentleness and cheerfulness, these come before all morality; they are the perfect duties.*' . . .

I remember now (as one remembers little things at such times) that, when first I heard of his going to Samoa, there came into my head (Heaven knows why) a trivial, almost ludicrous passage from his favourite, Sir Thomas Browne: a passage beginning 'He was fruitlessly put in hope of advantage by change of Air, and imbibing the pure Aërial Nitre of those Parts; and therefore, being so far spent, he quickly found Sardinia in Tivoli, and the most healthful air of little effect, where Death had set her Broad Arrow.' . . . A statelier sentence of the same author occurs to me now—'To live, indeed, is to be again ourselves, which being not only a hope, but an evidence in noble believers, it is all one to lie in St. Innocent's Churchyard, as in the sands of Egypt. Ready

to be anything in the ecstacy of being ever, and as content with six foot as the *moles* of Ardianus.'

This one lies, we are told, on a mountain-top overlooking the Pacific. At first it seemed so much easier to distrust a news agency than to accept Stevenson's loss. 'O captain, my captain!' . . . One needs not be an excellent writer to feel that writing will be thankless work, now that Stevenson is gone. But the papers by this time leave no room for doubt. 'A grave was dug on the summit of Mount Vaea, thirteen hundred feet above the sea. The coffin was carried up the hill by Samoans with great difficulty, a track having to be cut through the thick bush which covers the side of the hill from the base to the peak.' For the good of man, his father and grandfather planted the high sea-lights upon the Inchcape and the Tyree coast. He, the last of their line, nursed another light and tended it. Their lamps still shine upon the Bell Rock and the Skerryvore; and—though in alien seas, upon a rock of exile—this other light shall continue, unquenchable by age, beneficent, serene.

In 1890 Mr. John A. Steuart published a series of 'Letters to Living Authors.' From the letter addressed to R. L. Stevenson we quote the following passages:

John A. Steuart.

Public men, it was not long ago observed, are public property; this is peculiarly the case with authors. I do not exceed my proprietary rights, then, in glancing briefly at what you have accomplished, and examining the ground whereon your fame rests. You have been active in many departments. According to your own statement, you have written innumerable dramas, which have never seen the light. Presumably they were not worth publishing; for it is not your habit to withhold anything that could be of any possible interest to your literary admirers. So considerate are you in this respect, indeed, that at an early age you have given the world personal memoirs such as most authors reserve either for posthumous publication, or for publication at the very close of their careers. But there is no valid reason in the world why an author should not publish his memoirs when it suits him; and the time is perhaps at hand when a writer will make his first appeal to the public with a volume of gossip about his

baby playmates and the troubles of teething-time. Your memoirs, though not without a touch of egotism, as some think, are so interesting that we shall be glad to have more when you have matter and leisure.*

Your chief work, however, has been in the realms of poetry, criticism, and romance. I dare say you would yourself be readiest to acknowledge that, if you had not been first favourably known as a prose writer, your poetry would hardly have gained you recognition. You have publicly attributed your success to your dire industry; and it is in reading your poetry, rather than your prose, that we see how just is your estimate of your own endowments. 'An infinite capacity for taking trouble' does not always fitly take the place of inspiration. In your 'A Child's Garden of Verses' there are many neat, sweet, and happy little things suited to the tender age of childhood, but nothing, or very little, that would prove nutritious at a maturer period of life. . . .

In 'Underwoods' you take a more ambitious flight, and as ambition, while carrying a man triumphantly over many obstacles, exhibits his weakness no less than his strength, so in this book the limitations of your genius are sharply emphasised. Throughout the volume the mighty impress of Burns, to quote a phrase from Mr. Lowell, is distinctly visible. . . . In short, the work is imitative, and hardly takes high rank for originality. Perhaps it was merely a *tour de force*. If so, we may read it and enjoy it, and lay it aside, treating it in no more serious spirit than did the author.

In criticism you show to more advantage. To be sure, you are not absolutely without bias, and a biassed critic is not to be implicitly trusted. You have called 'Tom Jones' dull, and thereby drawn down on yourself the solemn admonitions of Mr. Augustine Birrell, and the sportful and partial anger of your friend, Mr. Andrew Lang. We cannot let you call the work of Henry Fielding dull and rank you as a great critic. But you have made amends for this little fantasy by being judicial in other directions.

Your judgments on Scott, and Dumas, and Victor Hugo, and Hawthorne are, in the main, just; you have sufficient perspicacity to see, and sufficient candour to acknowledge, that Zola is not

a blockhead; and you have courageously condemned the moral delinquencies of your poetic model, Burns. But while you have done something in verse, and given us one or two volumes of agreeable criticism, your true sphere is fiction. It is on your romances that you would yourself rest your claim to fame; and it is as a writer of romance that you are most widely known and most warmly admired.

When 'Kidnapped,' which, I understand, you consider your 'best, indeed your only good, story,' was published, one enthusiastic journal said it was as good as anything in Carlyle, and far truer. I confess the aptness of the remark did not strike me on perusing the book; but that is of little consequence. Another journal, equally generous, called it as good as 'Rob Roy.' This last was very high praise indeed, and must have been peculiarly gratifying to you for three reasons—first, because the journal which gave the verdict was one of weight and influence; second, because you place Scott at the head of all writers of romance; and third, because 'Rob Roy' is, on your own confession, an especial favourite of yours. That you could wholly agree with the verdict, however, is more than I believe, for you can hardly imagine yourself just yet entitled to share Sir Walter's pedestal.

For myself, on reading 'Kidnapped' I did not think it quite as good as 'Rob Roy.' But I thought that for a boy's book it was in many respects too good—that your fine gift of characterisation was virtually thrown away; for, as you once observed yourself, boys do not care much for the study of character. If they did, there would be but a poor chance for some books which are enjoying considerable popularity. It struck me, then, that your study of character was too fine, especially your study of the character of Alan Breck Stewart. But while thinking this, the manner in which that gentleman is drawn gave me the keenest delight. 'Here,' I said to myself, curiously enough anticipating Mr. Augustine Birrell,—'here we have another splendid portrait added to the gallery of Scottish heroes of fiction.' That was my first impression. Further reflection, however, brought an ugly suspicion that the portrait was not entirely original after all; that, in fact, it had merely been taken down and touched up according to the latest canons in art. I

felt as if I had met the redoubtable Alan Breck somewhere before; in other vestments, it is true, and engaged in other pursuits, but surely the same man. Where had I seen him? Was it in some previous state of existence, or only in a dream of the night? Sudden as a flash came the revelation. To be sure, I had either seen him or his double before,—once when he was surreptitiously lifting his neighbour's cattle, and again when he was holding complacent argument,—like the daring rascal that he was—with a magistrate in the Tolbooth of Glasgow. 'Ah, eh, oh!' I exclaimed, falling, in my surprise, into the manner and dialect of the worthy Bailie Nicol Jarvie. 'My conscience, it's impossible—and yet—no! conscience, it canna be; and yet again—Deil hae me! that I should say sae, ye robber, ye cateran—ye born deevil that ye are to a' bad ends and nae guid ane—can this be you?' and calmly came the laconic rejoinder, 'E'en as ye see.' I may be mistaken, but it certainly seems to me that the lineaments of Mr. Stewart too distinctly suggest those of Mr. Macgregor. However, while saying this, let me hasten to confess that I think 'Kidnapped' the most delightfully written boy's book which has appeared for at least a decade. It is the work of one who is an artist, and not a mere sensation-monger. . . .

Besides novels and tales you have written short stories, in which you have done yourself perfect justice. With the single exception of Mr. Thomas Hardy, no living British writer so well understands, or so well succeeds in, this extremely difficult branch of fiction as yourself. . . .

And now, just a word regarding your work in general. Mr. Andrew Lang has stated that, since Thackeray, no English man of letters has been gifted with, or has acquired, so charming or original a style as yours. That is substantially true. Your style is facile, quaint, and suggestive; often it is brilliant, and always distinctive. Moreover, it has that subtle charm which lures one on one knows not how. In drilling yourself in the art of the novelist you have studied widely, and one sees in your work the influence of many masters. You have borrowed something from Hugo, from Dumas, from Scott, from Poe, from Hawthorne, and many others. But in the matter of style you are chiefly indebted to Hawthorne—the best stylist, to my

mind, in the entire range of that huge mass of fiction which is widely styled English. . . .

Nor in the enumeration of your qualities should your humour be forgotten. Nothing is rarer in literature than true humour; and in these days of spasmodic and dreary jesting, when the Comic Muse so often presents the appearance of a draggled and broken-winded jade—when her skirts are so often foul with the mire of the slums, and her breath hot with the fumes of the pot-house, it is pleasant to meet her in her native state,—trim, light, graceful, and clean,—a shepherdess in her laughing robes. Your humour is genuine and spontaneous, and pervades all you write. It does not show itself in caricature, nor in horse-play, but rises naturally from the heart of the matter like a gushing spring from the hard rock to refresh the thirsty wayfarer. It is in your humour that you are most original, and perhaps most delicious.

In a short paper on 'Some Letters of Bret Harte,' contributed by Mrs. A. S. Boyd to *Harper's Magazine*, October 1902, the following occurs:

He (Bret Harte) was a constant buyer and reader of fiction, and while hypercritical regarding his own work, all that was worthy in the writings of other men roused him to enthusiasm.

Bret Harte.

On its appearance in September 1893, 'Catriona' awoke his warmest admiration. Calling one day after reading the opening chapters, he spoke highly of his increasing interest in the story, and suggested lending us his copy when he had finished reading it.

Next day he hurried in, carrying a brand-new 'Catriona.'

'You must read this. I haven't read all mine yet, but I want you to read "Catriona" right away now, so I bought you a copy. It's simply delightful!'

In Mr. Coulson Kernahan's book of essays on literary subjects, 'Wise Men and a Fool,' published in 1901, the place of honour is given to 'The Soul of an Artist: Robert Louis Stevenson as revealed in his Letters.' The paper originally appeared in the *London Quarterly Review*.

What follows is the first and most noteworthy part of the study.

'There is but one art—to omit! Oh! if I knew how to omit, I would ask no other knowledge. A man who knew how to omit would make an "Iliad" of a daily paper.'

So wrote Stevenson to his cousin, Mr. R. A. M. Stevenson, in 1883. The passage is characteristic of him of whom it might be said that, although he loved his wife devotedly, and was devotedly loved by her in return, the very soul of him was celibate—celibate in the sense that his life was, from the outset, consecrated to his art.

Coulson Kernahan.

'I sleep upon my art for a pillow,' he wrote to Mr. Henley; 'I waken in my art; I am unready for death because I hate to leave it. I love my wife, I do not know how much, nor can, nor shall, unless I lost her; but while I can conceive my being widowed, I refuse the offering of life without my art. I *am* not but in my art; it is me; I am the body of it merely.'

That those who label him egoist are right in so doing I am by no means sure. It is true that he assumed each of his correspondents would be as interested in his art as he was himself, and that news of work done, work on hand, and work projected, fills no small space in his letters. But this does not argue egotism, else were it egotism for a lover to sing of his mistress, a devotee to speak of things sacred. The egotism would have been more apparent had Stevenson not spoken thus freely of his work, for your egotist is generally a *poseur*. And the very frankness of Stevenson's letters, the very *abandon* of them, should give pause to all who carry slings wherewith to cast stones at egotism, lest, in their haste, they make a target of an innocent man.

Considering the self-consciousness with which he wrote—though 'tis but fair to say that this self-consciousness was afterwards in a measure outgrown—the only cause for wonder is that he is never caught in a 'pose.'

To Stevenson—if only by virtue of his rare sense of humour and his even rarer capacity for self-criticism—the gentle art of attitudinising was an impossible accomplishment. Had one of the many Stevensons who were the tenants of his frail body

been caught by a brother-sprite and co-tenant in the act of tricking himself out and attitudinising before a mirror, we may be sure that the mannikin had been made to dance to the tune of a whip's lash.

That one of these many Stevensons—whether the angel or the animal (and he had not been the man he was but for a healthy dash of the brute), the moralist or the jest-maker, who shall say?—had a touch of vanity in him, there is no denying. But vanity is a spice that, provided it be used sparingly, brings out the flavour of the whole dish; and the man to whose making there went never a grain of vanity, would as a personality be as insipid as soup without salt. The writer who, like Stevenson, can make jest of his own folly, who can tell with relish a story against himself, will not easily become the prey of overweening vanity.

Unlike the proverbial 'little knowledge,' a little vanity is not always 'a dangerous thing.' To the children of Humour it is seldom more dangerous than some childish complaint; for Humour—careful old physicker that she is—knows what is best for her offspring; and lest in later years they fall victim to a more fell disease, she forgets not to inoculate them with as much of the virus as may be rubbed into a lancet-scratch. After that, they are not like to be troubled by the more serious malady.

The following is taken from the last volume of Mr. Justin M'Carthy's 'History of Our Own Times' (1880 to the Diamond Jubilee):

Justin M'Carthy, M.P.

The whole reading world felt a shock at the news that Robert Louis Stevenson was dead. He died on December 3, 1894. The death, indeed, was not unexpected, because Stevenson had long been in delicate and sinking health, and every one knew that he was not likely, as the Celtic phrase goes, 'to comb a grey head.' He had to leave Europe altogether, and was settled in one of the South Pacific Islands, where the soft and exquisite climate, the mild, ever-enduring summer, and the perfectly clear atmosphere, gave him the best chance that the world could give of a

prolonged existence. All these chances failed him in the end, and he died at the age of forty-four. He had endeared himself to the whole of the reading public of English-speaking countries. Perhaps since the great days of Dickens, and Thackeray, and George Eliot, and Charlotte Brontë, there was no novelist more popular in England. Indeed, at one time he got about him, certainly without any effort of his own, a school of enthusiasts and adorers who were prepared to put his name above that of any English novelist, living or dead. There were impassioned young writers who clamoured that some of his novels were beyond any ever written by Sir Walter Scott.

All this, of course, was absurd; but a man must have real genius in him who can create such a school of idolatry. There can be no doubt that many men and women of less rapturous and hyperbolic temperament were sometimes inclined to question Stevenson's merits, merely because of the wild trumpeting and drum-beating of his adorers. But Stevenson, judged impartially by his own work, was undoubtedly one of the greatest English writers during the later part of the nineteenth century. He stole quietly into the world of fame. Most of us heard of him, for the first time, a great many years ago, when a remarkable story, a short story, appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine*, called 'The Pavilion on the Links,' and signed with the initials 'R. L. S.' None of us then had the least idea as to the identity of the writer of the story, but some of us, at all events, felt satisfied that a new and fresh power had arisen in English literature.

All the rest of his career is, of course, the common possession of the reading public. He revived in 'Treasure Island' something that might be called the literature of Defoe, and in 'The Master of Ballantrae' he gave back to us the method of Walter Scott. But he was no imitator of Defoe or of Walter Scott. His work was always essentially his own, sprang from his own inspiration, and was carried out by his own mode of treatment. In the minds of many persons—of those, possibly, who have passed the romantic and the heroic days—his essays were still better than his novels. Some of us, who cannot admit for a moment that his novels were equal to those of Walter Scott, are quite willing to allow that his essays are equal to those of Charles

Lamb, or of François Coppée. Some of his studies of Edinburgh are perfectly captivating, at once by their realism and by their poetic beauty.

After his death it was proposed that there should be a public monument raised to him in this country. The original suggestion was made by Lord Rosebery, and, strange to say, some objection was started to it by a countryman of Stevenson and of Lord Rosebery. Better wait, it was urged, and see whether Stevenson's fame will hold out. This, as a piece of advice, was sensible enough. Monuments raised in a moment of national emotion are often apt to become unmeaning fabrics in course of time. Even a well-educated Englishman wandering about London to-day is sometimes apt to wonder, if he raises his eyes and looks at the things at all, who were the persons to whom this or that public monument was erected. It has been well said that if a man's fame needs a monument to preserve it, then he ought to have no monument at all. But in the case of Robert Louis Stevenson it surely might have been clear to any reasonable person that his was a literary fame which must endure, monument or no monument. The idea is not that we, the public, should erect a monument to a man who has captivated and controlled us by his genius, in order that we may tell posterity that there once was such a man, but in order to express our grateful appreciation of the man's genius and of his work. The monument to Sir Walter Scott in Edinburgh, the monument to Robert Burns in Ayr, were never put up with the foolish notion that by such erections, and by such erections only, could the memory of the men be perpetuated. The monuments were simply the tribute of gratitude from the living to the dead. They were designed as an *immortelle* is cast upon some great man's grave. Nobody supposes that the *immortelle* will prolong the great man's fame: it only testifies to other men's admiration, homage, and gratitude. In this sense, of course, a monument was due, and is due, to Robert Louis Stevenson. Hyperbolical admiration apart, it cannot be doubted that he started a new chapter, or at least that he revived an old and brilliant chapter, of English fiction. He will probably rank in time, not with the very best, but immediately after the very best. He created situations rather than characters, but when he set about drawing

a character, he drew with the firm and steady hand of a master. There was nothing oblique or vague about him. What he saw, he saw; and what he saw he could describe. If that is not to be an artist, then we, at least, have no idea of what an artist is.

Dr. Robertson Nicoll, writing under his *nom de guerre* of 'Claudius Clear' in the *British Weekly*, October 24, 1901, made the appearance of the 'Life' by Mr. Graham Balfour the occasion to set down some 'Notes and Queries about Robert Louis Stevenson.' The following passages from Dr. Nicoll's article are quoted as best lending themselves to the scheme of the present work:

Dr. W. Robertson Nicoll.

There is still room for a chapter on Stevenson's difficult approach to popularity. I am inclined to think that it was slower and more difficult than Mr. Balfour quite realises. Several proofs might be adduced. I shall mention but one. Mr. Balfour tells us that in 1874 Stevenson was elected a member of the Savile Club, which for the next five years was the centre of his London life. He was of all men the most clubable, and made many important friends amongst the members. He already knew Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Andrew Lang, and he was soon introduced to Dr. Appleton, the founder and editor of the *Academy*, and Mr. Walter Pollock, then, or later on, editor of the *Saturday Review*. It might have been expected that these friends of the Savile Club would appreciate his work, and find pleasure in making it known. But it is fairly clear that they did not estimate Stevenson very highly. In 1885 Stevenson published his 'Prince Otto,' and, so far as I can discover, the *Saturday Review* did not review it. Later on it reviewed the 'Black Arrow' amongst a number of other novels. The criticism was not enthusiastic, but the book was pronounced to be 'lengths ahead of "Prince Otto."' It has been maintained by at least one very eminent critic that 'Prince Otto' is the best of Stevenson's books. In any case, I well remember its appearance, and while the fumes of chloral seemed to be about it, it stood out very distinctly among the books of its day. The affection felt for Stevenson by his friends was evident, but their

critical judgment was qualified and cautious. Of this Stevenson himself was conscious enough at the time. Even after he had published 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' and 'Kidnapped,' he was willing to write for very moderate prices.

The fact is, I believe, that Stevenson was discovered in America. When he was comparatively unknown in this country, the Americans had become enthusiastic about him, and they were offering prices which took away his breath. It is a decided defect of Mr. Balfour's bibliography that he gives no account of Stevenson's career in America. Long ago I remember my friend Mr. S. S. M'Clure telling me that Stevenson was the favourite author of the American people. The news amazed me. Stevensonians in this country were doing their best to sound his praises, but met with very little response. This is not the first time that the judgment of America has anticipated the judgment of this country.

In a study entitled 'The Apotheosis of the Novel under Queen Victoria,'[1] which he contributed to the *Nineteenth Century*, May 1897, Mr. Herbert Paul writes as follows on the work of R. L. S.:

Herbert Paul.

Louis Stevenson, that young Marcellus of our tongue, tried his genius on them [short stories]. But the 'New Arabian Nights,' though I am not ashamed to confess that I would rather read them than the old, do not reveal the author of 'Kidnapped' and the 'Master of Ballantrae.' Stevenson is one of the very few really exquisite and admirable writers who deliberately sat down to form a style. He was singularly frank about it. He has told the public what he read, and how he read it, and a very strange blend of authors it was. In nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of a thousand the result would have been a disastrous failure. In Mr. Stevenson's case it was a brilliant success. Of course, every critic thinks that he would have found out the secret for himself. Certainly Mr. Stevenson's books are the most studiously elaborate works of art. But the art is so good that, though it can hardly be said to conceal, it justifies and

[1] Reprinted in 'Men and Letters' by Herbert W. Paul.

commends itself. The reader feels as a personal compliment the immense pains which this humblest of geniuses has bestowed upon every chapter and every sentence of all the volumes he wrote entirely himself. It is said that his warmest champions belong to his own sex. For while he does, like Falstaff, in some sort handle women, and while Miss Barbara Grant, or the girl in 'The Dynamiter,' would have been the delight of any society it had pleased them to adorn, his writings teach that it is not the passion of love, but the spirit of adventure, which makes the world go round. The question whether the two influences can be altogether separated does not belong to a review of Victorian romance.' There have been novels without women, even in French. Victor Hugo wrote one. Ferdinand Fabre has written another. But it is a dangerous experiment, or would be if it were likely to be repeated. 'Weir of Hermiston,' in which the eternal element of sex was revived, is surely one of the greatest tragedies in the history of literature. It is far sadder than 'Denis Duval' or 'Edwin Drood.' Thackeray and Dickens had done their work. We know the full extent of their marvellous powers. But that cannot be said of Stevenson. 'Weir of Hermiston' is a fragment, and a fragment it must remain. But there is enough of it to show beyond the possibility of doubt that the complete work would have been the greatest achievement of that wonderful mind. The sleepless soul has perished in his pride.

XIII

POEMS TO STEVENSON

The verses here collected are arranged as nearly as possible in accordance with the dates of their writing.

TO ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Because the way is long, and we may never
  Meet face to face this side the shadowed land;
  Because—a thousand things!—because the hand
May seek in friendly, but in vain, endeavour
Some dreamed-of clasp; because, though seas may sever
  This kindred-seeking dust, there is no strand
  Too far for loving thoughts—spread wave or sand.
For evermore, thought scorneth them for ever:—
Therefore lest fate hold by her barrier still,
  No kindlier proving, hence, than in the past—
    Lest on that unknown bourn there is no meeting,—
For thee, upon the tide of good and ill
  Which floods with ceaseless flow this world, I cast
    This waif: for thee, brave heart, my soul's best greeting.

ROBERT BURNS WILSON.

The Critic (New York), Sept. 17, 1887.

TO PROSPERO IN SAMOA

A world away in dreams we roam—
  The tempest howls, the lightnings fall;
Slim rainbows span the leaping foam
  That shatters on your fortress wall;
Yet forth to shipwreck would we go
To be the guests of Prospero:

To join your court where glints the blue
  Through frets of lank banana fans—

Mirandas, but of warmer hue,
And other, lazier Calibans,
And beaded Ariel-eyes that glow
To list the tale of Prospero.

They stoop from sultry southern stars,
They rise from yonder Peaceful Sea,
The sprites you bind in mystic bars
On Fancy's page, your thralls, as we.
A dream!—we wake, and falling snow
Hides Treasure Isle and Prospero.

Then flash us tidings of your weal!
Bid Ariel tread the ocean floor,
And fire-fed dragons, ribbed with steel,
Rush treasure-freighted to our shore
With tales of mingled mirth and woe,
The magic scroll of Prospero!

The Bookman, May 1892. Y. Y.

ON A YOUTHFUL PORTRAIT OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON[1]

A face of youth mature; a mouth of tender,
Sad, human sympathy, yet something stoic
In clasp of lips: wide eyes of calmest splendour,
And brow serenely ample and heroic;—
The features—all—lit with a soul ideal. . . .
O visionary boy! what were you seeing,
What hearing, as you stood thus midst the real
Ere yet one master-work of yours had being?

Is it a foolish fancy that we humour—
Investing daringly with life and spirit
This youthful portrait of you ere one rumour
Of your great future spoke that men might hear it?—
Is it a fancy, or your first of glories,
That you were listening, and the camera drew you
Hearing the voices of your untold stories
And all your lovely poems calling to you?

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

[1] See Frontispiece to this Volume.

WRITTEN IN A COPY OF MR. STEVENSON'S 'CATRIONA'

Glorious Sir Walter, Shakespeare's brother brain,
Fortune's invincible victor-victim, Scott,
Mere lettered fame, 'tis said, esteeming not,
Save as it ministered to weightier gain,
Had yet his roseate dream, though dreamed in vain;
The dream that, crowning his terrestrial lot,
A race of great and splendid heirs, begot
Of his own loins, o'er Abbotsford should reign.

Fate spurned his wish, but promised, in amends,
One mighty scion of his heart and mind:
And where far isles the languid ocean fleck,—
Flying the cold kiss of our northern wind,—
Lo, the rare spirit through whom we hail as friends
The immortal Highland maid and Alan Breck!

WILLIAM WATSON.

'Odes and Other Poems,' 1894.

R. L. S.

Wondrous as though a star with twofold light
Should fill her lamp for either hemisphere,
Piercing cold skies with scintillation clear,
And glowing on the sultry Southern night;
Was miracle of him who could unite
Pine and the purple harbour of the deer
With palm-plumed islets that sequestered hear
The far-off wave their zoning coral smite.
Still roars the surf, still bounds the wave, but where
Is one to see and hear and tell again?
As dancers pause on an arrested air
Fail the fast-thronging figures of the brain;
And shapes unshapely huddle in dim lair,
Awaiting ripe vitality in vain.

RICHARD GARNETT.

Illustrated London News, January 1895; reprinted and altered in 'The Queen and Other Poems,' 1901.

HOME FROM THE HILL

'Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.'—R. L. S.

Let the weary body lie
Where he chose its grave,
'Neath the wide and starry sky,
By the Southern wave;
While the island holds her trust
And the hill keeps faith,
Through the watches that divide
The long night of death.

But the spirit, free from thrall,
Now goes forth of these
To its birthright, and inherits
Other lands and seas:
We shall find him when we seek him
In an older home,—
By the hills and streams of childhood
'Tis his weird to roam.

In the fields and woods we hear him
Laugh and sing and sigh;
Or where by the Northern breakers
Sea-birds troop and cry;
Or where over lonely moorlands
Winter winds fly fleet;
Or by sunny graves he hearkens
Voices low and sweet.

We have lost him, we have found him:
Mother, he was fain
Nimbly to retrace his footsteps;
Take his life again
To the breast that first had warmed it,
To the tried and true,—
He has come, our well belovèd,
Scotland, back to you!

W. ROBERTSON NICOLL.

Blackwood's Magazine, February 1895.

VALEDICTION (R. L. S. 1894)

When from the vista of the Book I shrink,
From lauded pens that earn ignoble wage
Begetting nothing joyous, nothing sage,
Nor keep with Shakespeare's use one golden link;
When heavily my sanguine spirits sink
To read too plain on each impostor page
Only of kings the broken lineage,
Well for my peace if then on thee I think,
Louis: our priest of letters and our knight
With whose familiar baldric hope is girt,
From whose young hands she bears the grail away:
All glad, all great! Truer because thou wert
I am and must be, and in thy known light
Go down to dust, content with this my day.

LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY.

Century Magazine, March 1895; reprinted as postlude to Miss Alice Brown's privately circulated study of R. L. S.; and also in 'England and Yesterday,' a book of verse, 1898.

IN MEMORIAM STEVENSON

Life's Angel shining sat in his high place
To view the lands and waters of his globe;
A leaning Shape came through the fields of Space
Stealthy, and touched the hem of his white robe.

The Angel turned: Brother, what ill brings thee
Like thieving night to trespass on my day?
Yonder, Death answered him, I cannot see;
Yonder I take this star to light my way.

OWEN WISTER.

Atlantic Monthly, April 1895.

FOR R. L. S. ON VAEA TOP

Days are drooping, thought is dumb,
Crept into a cave;
Winter terrors thickly come
On the haunted wave:
Light and delight have left
What in their stead,
Since the muses kneel about the bravely-fallen head?

Black the deadly clouds o'errush
All our heaven in him:
Power in many a boreal flush,
Play of starry whim.
Ere the king reed is cut,
Ere the full strain,
Lo, the fickle faun is gone; the woods are bare again.

Who are truant to the North
Chiding, can restore?
Which of cities, leaning forth,
Touch him as before?
Where serried Cant effrays
Art, as of old,
Nevermore aloft that loved oriflamme of gold.

Would he might indeed delay
While the onset lowers,
Would he had not borne away
Ardour his and ours.
O song upon the march
Elsewhither blown!
The battle-dread is on us now, riding afield alone.

Wisdom, in the motley dressed,
Wholesome as sunshine,
Poesy, that from her breast
Strews the bay divine,
These in no natal earth
Fold him; exiled
With the wilder, gentler, he so gentle and so wild.

Aye asunder from his own
Though Samoa keep
One uplifted to her throne
Of pellucid sleep,
Winds that across the world
Ride the sea-swell,
Sign him with the tears of home, the chrism of farewell.

Was it menace from the dark,
Was it body's fret,
Early taught a patient barque
Cruises sadder yet?
Or but some primal urge
Greatly obeyed,
Drew to the unfriended hearts the heart of mercy made?

Where from water's blue outpost
Lonely Beauty calls,
Calls, and down the glowing coast
Felt denial falls;
Where tern above the cloud
Trooping, have heard
From the Prince of Welcomes by, no glad saluting word;

Where the slanted glens unbar
Boldly to the gale,
And aromas, loosed afar,
Kiss the trader's sail;
Where over lava-fire
Dances the vine,
For a symbol perfected, thy sepulchre and shrine!

Memory like a rainbow stair
Painted on the morn,
Dearest name that on that prayer
Christianly is borne,
Soon to romance exhaled,
Linger and live:
Meed no purer unto man the childlike men can give.

Still the islands good to seek
Rule in wonted mode;
Let their bright surf-belted peak
Still be thine abode!
Grief of the loyal race
Time shall retrieve,
And all in airy legendry thy shining spirit weave.

To the bathers' wonder, oft
As the night is nigh,
And to babes beneath the soft
Wings of lullaby
(While we of dull unfaith,
Thrall to our sighs,
Dual dream to quicken thee and us may not devise),

There on summer's holy hills
In illumined calms,
Smile of TUSITALA thrills
Thro' a thousand palms;
There in a rapture breaks
Dawn on the seas,
When TUSITALA from his shoon unbinds the Pleiades.

LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY.

Printed as prelude to the privately circulated brochure on Stevenson (Boston, U.S.A., Copeland and Day, May 1895), and revised for the present volume.

TO ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

O sailor, sailing the Unfathomed Sea,
What wind now speeds thee, and what star's thy guide?
And what adventure worth thy bravery
Calls with the lifting tide?

For thee the new coasts, gleaming, gleaming still,
For us the hope, the plunge, the engulfing night.
Oh, land! and set thy beacon on the Hill,
Our pilot into Light!

BRUCE PORTER.

The Lark (San Francisco), June 1895.

AN ELEGY

High on his Patmos of the Southern Seas
Our northern dreamer sleeps,
Strange stars above him, and above his grave
Strange leaves and wings their tropic splendours wave,
While, far beneath, mile after shimmering mile,
The great Pacific, with its faery deeps,
Smiles all day long its silken, secret smile.

Son of a race nomadic, finding still
Its home in regions furthest from its home,
Ranging untired the borders of the world,
And resting but to roam;
Loved of his land, and making all his boast
The birthright of the blood from which he came,
Heir to those lights that guard the Scottish coast,
And caring only for a filial fame;
Proud, if a poet, he was Scotsman most,
And bore a Scottish name.

Death, that long sought our poet, finds at last,
Death, that pursued him over land and sea:
Not his the flight of fear, the heart aghast
With stony dread of immortality,
He fled 'not cowardly';
Fled, as some captain, in whose shaping hand
Lie the momentous fortunes of his land,
Sheds not vainglorious blood upon the field,
But dares to fly—yea! even dares to yield.

Death! why, at last he finds his treasure isle,
And he the pirate of its hidden hoard;
Life! 'twas the ship he sailed to seek it in,
And Death is but the pilot come aboard.
Methinks I see him smile a boy's glad smile
On maddened winds and waters, reefs unknown,
As thunders in the sail the dread typhoon,
And in the surf the shuddering timbers groan;
Horror ahead, and Death beside the wheel:
Then—spreading stillness of the broad lagoon,
And lap of waters round the resting keel.

. . . . . .

Virgil of prose! far distant is the day
When at the mention of your heartfelt name
Shall shake the head, and men, oblivious, say:
'We know him not, this master, nor his fame.'
Not for so swift forgetfulness you wrought,
Day upon day, with rapt, fastidious pen,
Turning, like precious stones, with anxious thought,
This word and that again and yet again,
Seeking to match its meaning with the world;
Nor to the morning stars gave ears attent,
That you, indeed, might ever dare to be
With other praise than immortality
Unworthily content.

Not while a boy still whistles on the earth,
Not while a single human heart beats true,
Not while Love lasts, and Honour, and the Brave,
Has earth a grave,
O well-beloved, for you!

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

'Robert Louis Stevenson and Other Poems' (John Lane, London, 1895).

A SEAMARK

A THRENODY FOR ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Cold, the dull cold! What ails the sun,
And takes the heart out of the day?
What makes the morning look so mean,
The Common so forlorn and grey?

The wintry city's granite heart
Beats on in iron mockery,
And like the roaming mountain rains,
I hear the thresh of feet go by.

It is the lonely human surf
Surging through alleys chill with grime,
The muttering churning ceaseless floe
Adrift out of the North of time.

Fades, it all fades! I only see
The poster with its reds and blues

Bidding the heart stand still to take
Its desolating stab of news.

That intimate and magic name:
'Dead in Samoa.' . . . Cry your cries,
O city of the golden dome,
Under the grey Atlantic skies!

But I have wander-biddings now,
Far down the latitudes of sun,
An island mountain of the sea,
Piercing the green and rosy zone,

Goes up into the wondrous day.
And there the brown-limbed island men
Are bearing up for burial,
Within the sun's departing ken,

The master of the roving kind.
And there where time will set no mark
For his irrevocable rest,
Under the spacious melting dark,

With all the nomad tented stars
About him, they have laid him down
Above the crumbling of the sea,
Beyond the turmoil of renown.

O all you hearts about the world
In whom the truant gipsy blood,
Under the frost of this pale time,
Sleeps like the daring sap and flood

That dream of April and reprieve!
You whom the haunted vision drives,
Incredulous of home and ease,
Perfection's lovers all your lives!

You whom the wander-spirit loves
To lead by some forgotten clue

For ever vanishing beyond
Horizon brinks for ever new;

The road, unmarked, ordained, whereby
Your brothers of the field and air
Before you, faithful, blind, and glad,
Emerged from chaos pair by pair;

The road whereby you too must come,
In the unvexed and fabled years
Into the country of your dream,
With all your knowledge in arrears!

You who can never quite forget
Your glimpse of Beauty as she passed,
The well-head where her knee was pressed,
The dew wherein her foot was cast;

O you who bid the paint and clay
Be glorious when you are dead,
And fit the plangent words in rhyme
Where the dark secret lurks unsaid;

You brethren of the light-heart guild,
The mystic fellowcraft of joy,
Who tarry for the news of truth,
And listen for some vast ahoy

Blown in from sea, who crowd the wharves
With eager eyes that wait the ship
Whose foreign tongue may fill the world
With wondrous tales from lip to lip;

Our restless loved adventurer,
On secret orders come to him,
Has slipped his cable, cleared the reef,
And melted on the white sea-rim.

O granite hills, go down in blue!
And like green clouds in opal calms,
You anchored islands of the main,
Float up your loom of feathery palms!

'For deep within your dales, where lies
A valiant earthling stark and dumb,
This savage, undiscerning heart
Is with the silent chiefs who come

To mourn their kin and bear him gifts,—
Who kiss his hand, and take their place,
This last night he receives his friends,
The journey-wonder on his face.

He 'was not born for age.' Ah no,
For everlasting youth is his!
Part of the lyric of the earth
With spring and leaf and blade he is.

'Twill never more be April now
But there will lurk a thought of him
At the street corners, gay with flowers
From rainy valleys purple-dim.

O chiefs, you do not mourn alone!
In that stern North where mystery broods,
Our mother grief has many sons
Bred in those iron solitudes.

It does not help them, to have laid
Their coil of lightning under seas;
They are as impotent as you
To mend the loosened wrists and knees.

And yet how many a harvest night,
When the great luminous meteors flare
Along the trenches of the dusk,
The men who dwell beneath the Bear,

Seeing those vagrants of the sky
Float through the deep beyond their hark,
Like Arabs through the wastes of air,—
A flash, a dream, from dark to dark,—

Must feel the solemn large surmise:
By a dim, vast and perilous way
We sweep through undetermined time,
Illumining this quench of clay,

A moment staunched, then forth again.
Ah, not alone you climb the steep
To set your loving burden down
Against the mighty knees of sleep.

With you we hold the sombre faith
Where creeds are sown like rain at sea;
And leave the loveliest child of earth
To slumber where he longed to be.

His fathers lit the dangerous coast
To steer the daring merchant home;
His courage lights the darkling port
Where every sea-worn sail must come.

And since he was the type of all
That strain in us which still must fare,
The fleeting migrant of a day,
Heart-high, outbound for otherwhere,

Now therefore, where the passing ships
Hang on the edges of the noon,
And Northern liners trail their smoke
Across the rising yellow moon,

Bound for his home, with shuddering screw
That beats its strength out into speed,
Until the pacing watch descries
On the sea-line a scarlet seed

Smoulder and kindle and set fire
To the dark selvedge of the night,
The deep blue tapestry of stars,
Then sheet the dome in pearly light;

There in perpetual tides of day,
Where men may praise him and deplore,
The place of his lone grave shall be
A seamark set for evermore,

High on a peak adrift with mist,
And round whose bases, far beneath
The snow-white wheeling tropic birds,
The emerald dragon breaks his teeth.

BLISS CARMAN.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

Published separately in 1895, and included in 'By the Aurelian Wall and other Elegies' (L. C. Page and Co., Boston, 1898), and in 'Ballads and Lyrics' (A. H. Bullen, London, 1902).

THE WORD OF THE WATER

FOR THE UNVEILING OF THE STEVENSON FOUNTAIN IN SAN FRANCISCO

God made me simple from the first,
And good to quench your body's thirst.
Think you He has no ministers
To glad that wayworn soul of yours?

Here by the thronging Golden Gate
For thousands and for you I wait,
Seeing adventurous sails unfurled
For the four corners of the world.

Here passed one day, nor came again,
A prince among the tribes of men.
(For man, like me, is from his birth
A vagabond upon the earth.)

Be thankful, friend, as you pass on,
And pray for Louis Stevenson,
That by whatever trail he fare
He be refreshed in God's great care!

BLISS CARMAN.

'By the Aurelian Wall and other Elegies,' 1898.

STEVENSON OF THE LETTERS

Long, hatchet face, black hair, and haunting gaze,
That follows, as you move about the room,
Ah! that is he who trod the darkening ways,
And plucked the flowers upon the edge of doom.

The bright, sweet-scented flowers that star the road
To death's dim dwelling, others heed them not,
With sad eyes fixed upon that drear abode,
Weeping, and wailing their unhappy lot.

But he went laughing down the shadowed way,
The boy's heart leaping still within his breast,
Weaving his garlands when his mood was gay,
Mocking his sorrows with a solemn jest.

The high gods gave him wine to drink; a cup
Of strong desire, of knowledge, and of pain,
He set it to his lips and drank it up
Smiling, then turned unto his flowers again.

These are the flowers of that immortal strain,
Which, when the hand that plucked them drops and dies,
Still keep their radiant beauty free from stain,
And breathe their fragrance through the centuries.

B. PAUL NEUMAN.

The Spectator, January 27, 1900.

R. L. S.: IN MEMORIAM

These to his memory. May the age arriving,
As ours recall
That bravest heart, that gay and gallant striving,
That laurelled pall!

Blithe and rare spirit! We who later linger,
By bleaker seas,
Sigh for the touch of the Magician's finger,
His golden keys!

AUSTIN DOBSON.

Dedication of the New Century Number of *The Student* (issued by the Students' Representative Council, University of Edinburgh), January 1901.

XIV

MISCELLANEA

The pages which make up this section contain some curious and valuable matter relating to Stevenson, but not fitting aptly into any of the earlier chapters, or added too late for classifying. The items are arranged approximately to the dates of their first appearance among the ephemeræ of newspaper and magazine.

'Books which Influenced Me.'

To the *British Weekly*, 13th May 1887, Stevenson contributed by invitation of the editor an article on 'Books which have Influenced Me,' which was reprinted in the volume of 'Later Essays' included in the Edinburgh Edition in 1895. The following brief passage may be quoted, since it relies less on the context than any other, and contains the pith of the article:

> The most influential books, and the truest in their influence, are works of fiction. They do not pin the reader to a dogma, which he must afterwards discover to be inexact; they do not teach him a lesson, which he must afterwards unlearn. They repeat, they arrange, they clarify the lesson of life; they disengage us from ourselves, they constrain us to the acquaintance of others; and they show us the web of experience, but with a singular change—that monstrous, consuming *ego* of ours being, for the nonce, struck out. To be so, they must be reasonably true to the human comedy; and any work that is so serves the turn of instruction. But the course of our education is answered best by those poems and romances where we breathe a magnanimous atmosphere of thought and meet generous and pious characters. Shakespeare has served me best. Few living

friends have had upon me an influence so strong for good as Hamlet or Rosalind. The last character, already well beloved in the reading, I had the good fortune to see, I must think, in an impressionable hour, played by Mrs. Scott Siddons. Nothing has ever more moved, more delighted, more refreshed me; nor has the influence quite passed away. The dying Lear had a great effect upon my mind, and was the burthen of my reflections for long, so profoundly, so touchingly generous did it appear in sense, so overpowering in expression. Perhaps my dearest and best friend outside of Shakespeare is D'Artagnan—the elderly D'Artagnan of the 'Vicomte de Bragelonne.' I know not a more human soul, nor, in his way, a finer; I shall be very sorry for the man who is so much of a pedant in morals that he cannot learn from the Captain of Musketeers. Lastly, I must name the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' a book that breathes of every beautiful and valuable emotion.

Stevenson mentions the following books, in the sequence here observed, as having influenced him more or less: 'The New Testament, and in particular the gospel according to St. John,' Whitman's 'Leaves of Grass,' the works of Herbert Spencer—'no more persuasive rabbi exists'—'Goethe's Life' by Lewes, adding, 'I know no one whom I less admire than Goethe'; Martial, Marcus Aurelius's 'Meditations,' Wordsworth, Meredith's 'The Egoist,' Thoreau, Hazlitt, and Mitford's 'Tales of Old Japan.'

To the *Academy*, after the appearance of 'Letters to his Family and Friends,' 'I. R.' contributed the subjoined note on Stevenson's projected biography of William Hazlitt:

A 'Dream-Book of R. L. S.

Of the many books which Robert Louis Stevenson planned and discussed with his friends in his correspondence there is none, perhaps, which would have been more valued than the biography of William Hazlitt. Whenever Stevenson refers to Hazlitt, whether in his essay on 'Walking Tours' or in his letters, he makes one wish he would say more. This is what he writes to Mr. P. G. Hamerton:

'I am in treaty with Bentley for a life of Hazlitt; I hope it will not fall through, as I love the subject, and appear to have found a publisher who loves it also. That, I think, makes things more pleasant. You know I am a fervent Hazlittite; I mean regarding him as the English writer who has had the scantiest justice. Besides which, I am anxious to write biography; really, if I understand myself in quest of profit, I think it must be good to live with another man from birth to death. You have tried it, and know.'

If the qualification of a biographer is to understand his subject, Stevenson may be said to have been well qualified to write on Hazlitt. Mr. Leslie Stephen has given us a fine critical estimate of Hazlitt the writer, and the late Mr. Ireland's prefatory memoir to his admirable selection from the Essays, with its enforced limitations, is an excellent piece of biographical condensation, but the life of the essayist has yet to be written. The subject has been tried by many others, but no one has quite captured the spirit of Hazlitt. Had the details of Hazlitt's life, with his passionate hates and loves, been told by himself in the manner of his beloved Rousseau, he might have produced a book which for interest would have rivalled the 'Confessions,' but failing such a work one must deplore that Stevenson was not encouraged to write on the subject.

Two American Favourites.

When Mr. Gosse was going to America in the winter of 1884 to lecture, Stevenson was particularly anxious that he should lay at the feet of the late Frank R. Stockton his homage, couched in the following lines:

My Stockton if I failed to like
It were a sheer depravity;
For I went down with the 'Thomas Hyke,'
And up with the 'Negative Gravity.'

In a magazine article quoted by the New York *Critic*, Professor Brander Matthews writes:

The precious memory of a single afternoon at the Savile Club. . . . We chiefly talked of the craft and the art of story-telling and of its technique. . . . Stevenson praised heartily

Mark Twain's 'Huckleberry Finn,' and it was his belief that it was greater, riper, and richer than its forerunner, 'Tom Sawyer.'

[1] This report is reprinted from the New York *Critic*, January 12, 1895:

Memorial Meeting in New York.

The meeting at Carnegie Hall on Friday evening, January 4, 1895, in memory of Robert Louis Stevenson, proved in every way successful. It was held under the auspices of the Uncut Leaves Society, of which Mr. L. J. B. Lincoln is the director, and with the approval and co-operation of eminent men of letters, artists, publishers, and other men of light and leading. The gathering was a distinguished one; and the close heed given to every speaker demonstrated a sympathetic interest in all that concerns the romancer whose name had drawn together these hundreds of hearers.

Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman presided, and the list of Vice-Presidents included—to mention first the followers of Stevenson's own vocation as novelist—the names of William Dean Howells, Frank R. Stockton, George W. Cable, Rudyard Kipling, David Christie Murray, Professor H. H. Boyesen, Edward Eggleston, H. C. Bunner (editor of *Puck*), Judge Robert Grant, and Professor Brander Matthews; R. H. Stoddart, R. W. Gilder (editor of the *Century*), William Winter, Professor George E. Woodberry, Moncure D. Conway, Professor William M. Sloane, the Rev. Dr. Henry Van Dyke, the Rev. Dr. William S. Rainsford, Hamilton W. Mabie (editor of the *Outlook*), Mayor Strong, President Low of Columbia and President Gilman of John Hopkins, J. Pierpont Morgan, Andrew Carnegie, Laurence Hutton, Augustus St. Gaudens, Stanford White, Will H. Low, Professor Francis H. Stoddard, William Allen Butler, H. O. Houghton, J. Henry Harper, Charles Scribner, Frank H. Scott, Walter Damrosch, Henry Marquand, James Grant Wilson, T. Munson Coan, John Reid, Francis H. Williams, Daniel G. Thompson, E. L. Godkin (editor of the *Evening Post*), Charles A. Dana (editor of the *Sun*), Joseph Pulitzer (proprietor of the *World*), St. Clair M'Kelway (editor of the Brooklyn *Eagle*), Walter H. Page (editor of the *Forum*) and Joseph B. Gilder (editor of the *Critic*). Not included in this list, but seated on the platform, were W. W.

Appleton, General Horace Porter (President of the Union League Club), David Munro, and William H. Rideing (of the *North American Review*), Colonel W. C. Church (editor of the *Army and Navy Journal*), Ripley Hitchcock, and J. Cleveland Cady, the architect. Several other gentlemen and one lady occupied seats on the platform.

Among the box-holders were several of the Vice-Presidents, and also the following persons:—Dean Hole, G. C. Beaman, M. H. Malroy, Gilman H. Tucker, Thomas B. Connery, Walter S. Logan, S. P. Avery, Robert Bridges, S. S. M'Clure, Henry T. Thomas, James Thorne Harper, Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge, Mrs. Ruth M'Enery Stuart, Mrs. Bayard Taylor, Mrs. Herman Melville, Mrs. D. M. Rollins, Mrs. Charles A. Clapp.

The programme comprehended addresses by Mr. Stedman, Mr. Andrew Carnegie, Mr. David Christie Murray, Mr. Edward Eggleston, Mr. G. W. Cable, and Mr. John Foord; Mr. Nelson Wheatcroft's reading of Stevenson's poems 'Ticonderoga' and 'Christmas at Sea'; and the singing by Mr. Leonard E. Auty of the coronach from 'The Lady of the Lake,' 'The Macgregors' Gathering,' and 'The Land o' the Leal.'

By Edmund Clarence Stedman

The President of the evening, who was gracefully introduced by Mr. Lincoln, spoke as follows:—

Such an assemblage—in the chief city of the western world—is impressive from the fact that we have not come together for any civic, or political, or academic purpose. I have been thinking, too, of its significance in view of considerations quite apart from the sorrowful cause of our gathering. But of these this is not the time to speak. On its face, this demonstration is a rare avowal of the worth of literary invention. It shows a profound regard for the career of a writer who delighted us, a sense of loss instantaneously awakened by the news of his taking off. For the moment we realise how thoroughly art and song and letters have become for us an essential part of life—a common ground whereupon we join our human love and laughter and tears, and at times forego all else to strew laurel and myrtle for one who has moved us to these signs and emotions.

Yes—we are brought together by tidings, almost from the Antipodes, of the death of a beloved writer in his early prime. The work of a romancer and poet, of a man of insight and feeling, which may be said to have begun but fifteen years ago, has ended, through fortune's sternest cynicism, just as it seemed entering upon even more splendid achievement. A star surely rising, as we thought, has suddenly gone out. A radiant invention shines no more; the voice is hushed of a creative mind, expressing its fine imaginings in this our peerless English tongue. His expression was so original and fresh from Nature's treasure-house—so prodigal and various its too brief flow,—so consummate, through an inborn gift made perfect by unsparing toil, that mastery of the art by which Robert Louis Stevenson conveyed those imaginings to us—so picturesque, yet wisely ordered, his own romantic life,—and now, at last, so pathetic a loss which renews

> 'The Virgilian cry,
> The sense of tears in mortal things,'—

that this assemblage has gathered, at the first summons, in tribute to the beautiful genius, and to avow that with the putting out of that bright intelligence the reading world experiences a more than wonted grief.

Stevenson was not of our own people, though he sojourned with us, and knew our continent from east to west as few of this large audience can know it. But a British author now, by statutory edict, is of our own. Certainly his fame is often made by the American people—yes, and sometimes unmade. Theirs is the great amphitheatrum. They are the ultimate court of review. All the more we are here 'for the honour of literature'; and so much the more it is manifest that the writer who lightens our hearts, who takes us into some new wonderland of his discovery, belongs, as I say, to the world. His name and fame are, indeed, a special glory of the country that bore him, and a vantage to his native tongue. But by just so much as his gift is absolute, and therefore universal, he belongs in the end to the world at large. Above all, it is the recounter—and the Greeks were clear-headed in deeming him a maker, whether his story be cast in prose or verse—who becomes the darling of mankind.

This has been so whether among the Grecian isles, or around the desert camp-fires, or in the gardens of Italy; and is so when he brings us his romance, as in our modern day, from our Pacific Eldorado, or from Indian barracks and jungle, or from the land of the Stuarts; or, like Stevenson and our own Melville before him, from the palm-fringed beaches of the Southern seas.

Judged by the sum of his interrupted work, Stevenson had his limitations. But the work was adjusted to the scale of a possibly long career. As it was, the good fairies brought all gifts, save that of health, to his cradle, and the art-spoiler wrapped them in a shroud. Thinking of what his art seemed leading to —for things that would be the crowning efforts of other men seemed 'prentice-work in his case—it is not safe to bound his limitations. And now it is as if Sir Walter, for example, had died at forty-four, with the 'Waverley Novels' just begun! In originality; in the conception of action and situation, which, however fantastic, are seemingly within reason, once we breathe the air of his Fancyland; in the union of bracing and heroic character and adventure; in all that belongs to tale-writing pure and simple, his gift was exhaustless. No other such charmer, in this wise, has appeared in his generation. We thought the stories, the fairy-tales, had all been told; but 'Once upon a time' meant for him our own time, and the grave and gay magic of Prince Florizel in dingy London or sunny France. All this is but one of his provinces, however distinctive. Besides, how he buttressed his romance with apparent truth! Since Defoe, none had a better right to say: 'There was one thing I determined to do when I began this long story, and that was to tell out everything as it befell.'

One or two points are made clear as we look at the shining calendar of Stevenson's productive years. It strengthens one in the faith that work of the first order cannot remain obscure. If put forth unheralded, it will be found out and will make its way. In respect of dramatic force, exuberant fancy, and ceaselessly varying imagination on the one hand, and on the other of a style wrought in the purest, most virile, and most direct temper of English narrative prose, there has been no latter-day writing more effective than that of Stevenson's longer fictions— 'Kidnapped,' with its sequel 'David Balfour,' 'The Master of

Ballantrae,' and that most poetic of absolute romances, 'Prince Otto.' But each of his shorter tales as well, and of his essays, charged with individuality, has a quality, an air of distinction, which, even though the thing appeared without signature, differentiated it from other people's best, set us to discovering its authorship, and made us quick to recognise that master-hand elsewhere.

Thus, I remember delighting in two fascinating stories of Paris in the time of François Villon, anonymously reprinted by a New York paper from a London magazine. They had all the quality, all the distinction, of which I speak. Shortly afterward I met Mr. Stevenson, then in his twenty-ninth year, at a London club, where we chanced to be the only loungers in an upper room. To my surprise he opened a conversation—you know there could be nothing more unexpected than that in London—and thereby I guessed that he was as much, if not as far, away from home as I was. He asked many questions concerning 'the States'; in fact, this was but a few months before he took his steerage-passage for our shores. I was drawn to the young Scotsman at once. He seemed much like a New Englander of Holmes's Brahmin caste, who might have come from Harvard or Yale. But, as he grew animated, I thought, as others have thought, and as one would suspect from his name, that he must have Scandinavian blood in his veins—that he was of the heroic, restless, strong, and tender Viking strain, and certainly from that day his works and wanderings have not belied the surmise. He told me that he was the author of that charming book of gipsying in the Cevennes, which just then had gained for him some attentions from the literary set. But if I had known that he had written those two stories of sixteenth-century Paris—as I learned afterwards when they reappeared in the 'New Arabian Nights'—I would not have bidden him good-bye as to an 'unfledged comrade,' but would have wished, indeed, to 'grapple him to my soul with hoops of steel.'

Another point is made clear as crystal by his life itself. He had the instinct, and he had the courage, to make it the servant, and not the master, of the faculty within him. I say he had the courage, but so potent was his birth-spell that doubtless he could not otherwise. Nothing commonplace sufficed him.

A regulation, stay-at-home life would have been fatal to his art. The ancient mandate, 'Follow thy Genius,' was well obeyed. Unshackled freedom of person and habit was a prerequisite; as an imaginative artist he felt—Nature keeps her poets and story-tellers children to the last—he felt, if he never reasoned it out, that he must gang his own gait, whether it seemed promising or the reverse, to kith, kin, or alien. So his wanderings were not only in the most natural, but in the wisest, consonance with his creative dreams. Wherever he went he found something essential for his use, breathed upon it, and returned it fourfold in beauty and worth. The longing of the Norseman for the tropic, of the pine for the palm, took him to the South Seas. There, too, strange secrets were at once revealed to him, and every island became an 'Isle of Voices.' Yes, an additional proof of Stevenson's artistic mission lay in the careless, careful liberty of life; in that he was an artist no less than in his work. He trusted to the impulse which possessed him—that which so many of us have conscientiously disobeyed, and too late have found ourselves in reputable bondage to circumstance.

But those whom you are waiting to hear will speak more fully of all this—some of them with the interest of their personal remembrance,—with the strength of their affection for the man beloved by young and old. In the strange and sudden intimacy with an author's record which Death makes sure, we realise how notable is the list of Stevenson's works produced since 1878; more than a score of books—not fiction alone, but also essays, criticism, biography, drama, even history, and, as I need not remind you, that spontaneous poetry which comes only from the true poet. None can have failed to observe that, having recreated the story of adventure, he seems in his later fiction to interfuse a subtler purpose—the search for character, the analysis of mind and soul. Just here his summons came. Between the sunrise of one day and the sunset of the next, he exchanged the forest study for the mountain grave. There, as he had sung his own wish, he lies 'under the wide and starry sky.' If there was something of his own romance, so exquisitely capricious, in the life of Robert Louis Stevenson, so, also, the poetic conditions are satisfied in his death, and in the choice of his burial-place

upon the top of Pala. As for the splendour of that maturity upon which he counted, now never to be fulfilled on sea or land, I say, as once before, when the great New England romancer passed in the stillness of the night:

> What though his work unfinished lies? Half-bent
> The rainbow's arch fades out in upper air;
> The shining cataract half-way down the height
> Breaks into mist; the haunting strain, that fell
> On listeners unaware,
> Ends incomplete, but through the starry night
> The ear still waits for what it did not tell.

By Andrew Carnegie

It seems most fitting that the first words I have ever spoken in this hall should be a tribute to a fellow-countryman who was born, like myself, within sight of Edinburgh. This is neither the time nor the place to measure Stevenson the author, but to consider him as a man. He was one of the most lovable characters of whom we have knowledge. Everywhere he went rays of sunshine emanated from him. You may have read the other day some communications to the London *Times* which illustrate his character. I will trouble you with only one. One who calls himself a poor Scotch journalist writes:—'I was lying ill at San Francisco. Some one mentioned the fact to Stevenson as he passed through to Samoa. He searched me out, entered my little room, approached my bedside, saying: "Well, my fellow-countryman, you are ill. We knights of the pen never gather money. I come to make you a loan." And with that he threw down a roll of bank-notes, and rushed to catch the steamer.' This was no isolated case; it was only acting out the daily life of the man whose memory we honour by assembling here. Great as he was as an author, the author is dwarfed beside the man. Like Scott, he has never written a line which he could wish obliterated; he has dealt only with the pure, the ennobling, as the great masters do. He did not degrade literature; he did not grovel in the putrid filth of the modern novel and the woman with a past. I rejoice as a Scotsman that Scotland is entirely free from the writers of the modern popular fiction of this character. Farewell, Stevenson! No, not farewell.

To the earthly body, yes; to the spirit immortal, no. All that was precious of you remains still with us. You have lived a noble life; you have not degraded literature nor polluted its holy purpose. You have set us all an example, and we shall best honour you and elevate ourselves by emulating you.

By Edward Eggleston

I was staying once at a hotel here, when the landlord told me that Robert Louis Stevenson was upstairs, sick. I wrote on my card, 'Not to intrude, but to pay my respects.' He sent word back, 'Oh, but you must come up.' We did not praise each other's books; did not burn any of that incense which we authors sometimes feel obliged to burn as a beginning of our acquaintance. And I never learned to love a man so much in so short a time. He had no fences. He had no secrecy. He gave me out of his heart. 'Oh,' said he, 'you have been on the frontier. You sail your boat every year, don't you? You take your life in your hands. You are rugged. To write novels a man has to take his life in his hand once a year at least. He does not know how it feels if he does not. You can't live in a city and write novels,'—meaning romances. And so he spoke, in his broad way, according to the enthusiasm of the moment. His was a sweet personality—a singularly unveiled soul. There were no hedges about him. He was a Scotsman in Scotland, an Englishman in England, an American in America, a Samoan in Samoa. He had no thought of remoulding America —of turning a new country into an old one. I can sound no note of pathos here to-night. Some lives are so brave and sweet and joyous and well-rounded that death does not leave them incomplete. Stevenson had no clap-trap in his stories, no great cause to advocate or exploit, no pruriency of the sort that came into fashion with Flaubert and Guy de Maupassant. He simply told his story, with no condescension, taking the reader into his heart and his confidence.

By George W. Cable

I feel as one who stands beside the filled grave. The moment has come for laying on the fresh sod, for placing a rose here

and a lily there. A passion-flower on the breast of the mound, and we are done. Though our eyes are dry, our hearts shed tender tears. He writes for us no more; we must look upon his uncompleted works as completed. It is left for me to speak the word of gratitude, joy, and praise in the name of his children. He wrote to the man in the child; to the child in the man. His main purpose was to conserve the child in the man and the man in the child. The great activities of the world are all tending, on one hand, to beat down the heroic conditions. On the other hand stands Romance, patiently, bravely endeavouring to preserve the heroic in our hearts. In our highly refined conditions we assume that refinement is the perfection of our lives. But at times, when we get true glimpses of ourselves, we find that the real task is to keep the Ten Commandments. What we need, first of all, is courage and truth. No romance ever filled with enthusiasm the heart of a boy or girl—whose hero was a liar. No romance ever made precious the hours whose hero was a coward. The purpose of the romance is to teach courage and truth without appearing to teach them. That is the task of the story-teller, and no one has told it better than he whom we lament with a new gratitude, with a fuller sweetness for him who has inspired our boys and girls to loftier ideals, to stronger resolutions for the great battle of life. He has gone, but his spirit still lives in his works—a preacher of sweet truths, teaching us to love our God and our neighbour.

By David Christie Murray

Mr. Murray's address included a discussion of literary art and fame, and an eloquent tribute to Dr. Holmes, Hawthorne, Irving, and other American authors.

The literary storehouse of the world is already so vast and so crowded that only the very best amongst the best of books can find a permanent place upon its shelves, and whether Stevenson's work can claim that rank is more than any man alive can say. That the problem should be generally accepted as one which awaits solution—that the question should hang at all in the balance—that he should be entered by the voice of common

acclaim for that race in which only the greatest of the great have won, is tribute enough for this hour, is a triumph which he would have valued dearly could his humility have permitted him to foresee it, and we are all assured that it cannot fail to be felt as a pride and a solace by those who were lately near and dear to him. . . .

Amongst our contemporaries there was none we loved better or prized more highly, or with sounder reason. And Stevenson had one especial faculty which made him very dear to his brethren in the craft of letters. He sought always with a settled passion of painstaking the very essence and perfection of the most difficult and most beautiful art in the world—the art of language. We know from his own printed confessions how he laboured in this way; but his printed confessions would all be worth nothing to us if they did not in themselves contain the proof and product of the constant severity of his struggles. . . .

Our lost Stevenson, above all men who have stepped over the horizon of English letters in my time, was appointed to this lovable task, and he followed it with a bright bravery which won the heart of every one of his co-workers. Some of us in the thought of his recent death feel a little ashamed—perhaps more than a little—at our own laxness, at the early decay of enthusiasm in the pursuit which was once so dear to us. Our dead friend wrote to me, in a letter which I shall cherish to my dying day, that my own works had sometimes been an encouragement to him, and sometimes a rebuke. God knows that I do not speak of this as a boast, for it strikes now keen as a reproach, and yet with a note of encouragement and helpful warning. I suppose all men of letters write more or less for a special circle, as a sweetheart adorns herself for a special admirer,

> 'And thinking, "this will please him best,"
> She takes a riband or a rose.'

And now my own little circle is less by one, and that one the dearest and the best and the kindest in his thoughts of me. . . .

And so our bright, quaint, beautiful Stevenson is yours for heritage as well as ours. All the Quaker-faced fun of those 'New Arabian Nights' of his, and the terror and human mystery of 'Ticonderoga,' and the grace and tenderness of his verse;

all his honest, loyal manhood, all the sweet severity and chaste riches of his style—yours for a heritage for ever if that should seem good to those who follow after us. Does it matter much to him whether his cold memorial bust shall shine in the lamplight for a night or two, or a year or two? He is gathered back to the great motherly darkness. The buoyant heart and the suffering frame are wrapped in quiet. He was lovely and pleasant in his day; he charmed us, and bewitched us, and is gone. He rests on his lonely mountain top among the far-off Southern seas, and thousands of hearts turn thither and will yet turn there for a year or two of our poor human time.

Reminiscences at Dundee Memorial Meeting.

On the 29th July 1897 a public meeting was held in Dundee to appoint a committee to co-operate with the Edinburgh Memorial Committee in raising the fund for a monument to Stevenson. The platform was occupied entirely by men of local reputation—if we except the Rev. David Macrae, whose name is at least national—and Lord Provost M'Grady presided. The purpose of the meeting was effected; but of the speeches delivered the only one that supplies matter for quotation here was that of Mr. James Cunningham, who was able to give some personal recollections of the author:

Mr. Cunningham said (the quotation is from the *Dundee Advertiser*) that one element in Stevenson which undoubtedly predominated was his extraordinary power of sympathy for all sorts and conditions of men, good and bad alike. He had the capacity of making friends wherever he went with all sorts of people. He said somewhere in one of his books that 'we travel to make friends.' He collected friendships as other men collected curios, and very much for the same reason—that these were the things which he valued. Once Stevenson gave him a very humorous account of how he had been refused admission to the gaming-tables of Monte Carlo, a refusal probably due to his unorthodox costume. He spoke with a real feeling of chagrin that he should have been debarred from the association even of those polished scoundrels who frequented the gaming-saloons.

Every one knew what enormous pains he took to acquire his literary style, and his writings also cost him a very great effort. On one occasion, when he and Mrs. Stevenson were staying near Pitlochry, Mr. Cunningham paid them a visit, and found that the two had spent a whole forenoon in trying to discover the word or phrase that would best describe the position of a shadow on the floor.'

That afternoon the novelist read to them a story he had just finished. The word 'jaw' occurred, and some one suggested that the old Scotch word 'chafts' might be substituted. He was very grateful for the suggestion. There was another element in Stevenson which formed certainly the deepest trait in his character, and that was the extraordinary courage with which he faced the ever near presence of death. It was just almost to a day twelve years ago since Mr. Cunningham saw him last on the shores of the Mediterranean. He was just recovering from a severe attack of illness, and what struck him was that he had still the same fresh interest in men and things. That attitude of his was not because he held life cheaply, or that his regard was not directed to what lay behind human existence; but because he felt it to be his duty all through life to play a man's part and play it cheerfully. In a letter he had from Stevenson not very long after he used the expression,—'I have come to the conclusion that health is a prejudice, and I am going to do without it.'

Melbourne Memorial Meeting.

On October 18, 1897, a largely attended meeting was held in the Town Hall, Melbourne, for the purpose of considering a memorial to 'the late Scottish writer, Robert Louis Stevenson.' Professor Morris, of Melbourne University, occupied the chair, and 'not a single Scotsman had been chosen as a speaker, as it was thought that gentlemen of that nationality would be apt to admire Stevenson just because he was a Scotsman' (*vide Melbourne Argus*). One of the speakers was the Rev. W. H. Fitchett, editor of the Australian *Review of Reviews*, and since famous as author of 'Fights for the Flag.' He said that the mother tongue of England would compare favourably with Greek, Latin,

or any other language in the world, and Robert Louis Stevenson had taught that tongue a new music, and had given the world a larger conception of the English language. He would differ from Mr. A. J. Balfour on certain points. He did not think that Stevenson would live as a thinker or as an historian or as a poet, but as a stylist the man had somehow learned the secret of our language and had acquired the art of shaping sentences lucid and clear as crystals of ice. For perfection of form and clearness of expression, where could they find a style like that of Stevenson? The three prose writers of the nineteenth century who have enlarged the bounds of the English language were De Quincey, Ruskin, and Stevenson. The story of how Stevenson achieved his style—for it was not born with him—would yet be one of the classic stories of our literature, and he was one of the few writers who had never written a line that he would have wished to blot out on his dying bed. He was a pure writer, and 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' was the most powerful sermon on the mischief of sin that had been delivered since the time of St. Paul the Apostle.

The only other speaker of more than local fame was 'Rolf Boldrewood' (the late Thomas Alexander Browne), who said that, added to the perfection of his work, Stevenson paid an attention to human interest and beauties. To his dying day in Samoa he never relaxed these, but strove for honour and justice and mercy to the inferior races. He had secured himself a monument of love and adoration from the people among whom he lived—a great and noble Englishman, using the term in its complete sense. Such a man was deserving of every honour on the part of Australia's leaders, and of the literary federation of the English-speaking writers.

The following excerpt from the *Daily News* of 20th December 1901 explains the delay which took place in

carrying out the purpose of the Memorial Meeting held at Edinburgh Music Hall in December 1896:

Five years have now elapsed since, at a great public meeting held in Edinburgh, it was remitted to an executive committee to take steps for the collection of funds and the erection of a memorial to Robert Louis Stevenson. It was in May 1898 that the executive were first in a position to estimate the sum likely to be available for the purposes of the memorial, and as this was not of a sufficient amount to warrant any attempt to erect an open-air memorial, it was finally agreed to seek permission from the Board of Saint Giles' High Kirk, Edinburgh—the Scottish national Valhalla—for the erection of a mural monument within its walls. It was further agreed to entrust the work to Mr. Augustus Saint Gaudens, 'the only sculptor of note who had studied Mr. Stevenson from the life.' All details having been satisfactorily adjusted, Mr. Saint Gaudens completed his model for the memorial, and was just about to have it cast in bronze, when, in July 1900, he became dangerously ill, and had to leave Paris for the United States, where he has since undergone several serious surgical operations.

The Edinburgh Memorial.

In the earlier months of the present year, however, letters from the sculptor indicated that the materials for the erection of the monument might be expected very shortly, and in point of fact the marble framework was actually received in Edinburgh in the month of May. But in June, Mr. Saint Gaudens wrote to say that he was so anxious that the *patine* (a surface-colouring obtained by chemical treatment and firing) should be to his satisfaction, that he had ordered the bronze cast to be forwarded to him in America for inspection, as he had found it impossible to come to Europe this year. From a letter from him, dated 24th November, it has just been ascertained that the patine did not satisfy him, and also that the completed bas-relief suggested to him the desirability of modifications which would improve its appearance. For these reasons, he intimates, he is remodelling the design, and intends to have a fresh cast made. This alteration involves a delay which in his opinion should now only postpone the completion of the memorial until the coming spring.

From the *Daily Graphic*, November 5, 1897. A picture of the memorial fountain accompanied the note:

San Francisco Memorial Fountain.

It is fitting, for many reasons, that San Francisco should be the first city in the United States to unveil a memorial to Robert Louis Stevenson. All cultured Americans are great admirers of the departed author, his works are widely read throughout the States, and the news of his death brought forth many keen expressions of regret from all parts of the country. Nowhere was the feeling stronger than in San Francisco, for Stevenson was well known there, and had paid frequent visits to the city. The memorial fountain, which was unveiled without ceremony on October 17th, stands in the old Plaza, an open space which, in the palmy days of gold fever, used to be the nucleus of the bustling life of that pioneer community. To-day the business centre of the town has shifted, and the Plaza is now the focus of the foreign and Chinese quarter. Stevenson when living there occupied a house within a stone's throw of the Plaza, and was never tired of studying the strange foreign life which ebbs and flows by night and by day through the streets of that Bohemian quarter. The fountain is of plain but tasteful design. The main granite shaft is thirteen feet high, and on top, executed in bronze, is a sixteenth century ship under full sail, emblematical of Stevenson's wandering and romantic tastes. The inscription, incised in plain lettering on the granite, consists of a passage from the author's 'Christmas Sermon' as follows:—

'To be honest, to be kind, to earn a little and spend a little less: to make, upon the whole, a family happier by his presence: to renounce when that shall be necessary and not be embittered: to keep a few friends, but these without capitulation—above all, on the same grim conditions, to keep friends with himself—here is a task for all that a man has of fortitude and delicacy.'

The following report of a most interesting ceremony in San Francisco last autumn is taken from the San Francisco *Chronicle*, November 14, 1902:

As though in aptest silent tribute to the memory of one whose

versatile pen had always painted nature most beautifully, the heavens cleared for a few moments before nine o'clock last night just enough to let the full high moon shine clearly down from among drifting rain-clouds and flood with silvery light the Robert Louis Stevenson monument in Portsmouth Square and the large group of university professors, literary folk, and men and women admirers gathered there just then to place wreaths and garlands upon the memorial shaft, while the widow of the gifted Scotch author planted at the rear base of the column a bit of ivy from a house in Scotland, where Stevenson spent part of his boyhood, and afterwards made the place famous in one of his stories by the escape of the hero down the very wall against which this ivy had grown. Upon the front of the glistening white granite of that monument are the words, 'To Remember Robert Louis Stevenson.' It was for this purpose that the people came into historic old Portsmouth Square in the night-time upon the anniversary of his birth to do honour to one who used to live in San Francisco before he became famous as the creator of 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,' 'Treasure Island,' and half a hundred other books that have given him first rank among the English writers of the last half-century. Like burnished gold the light bronze sails shone on the Spanish galleon atop the massive white granite. Slender, leafless little poplar-trees stood in weird silhouette beside the memorial. Broad, smooth lawns, moist earth paths, and the lantern-red lights of near-by Chinatown made up a strangely suggestive picture, while a giant weeping willow close by, the lofty windows from the City Prison across the street, and clanging electric cars, rounded out very appropriately the background for a memorial to a man who had written much of many things.

Birthday Celebration in San Francisco.

From the Plaza the little gathering went, in irregular procession, over into Bush Street to a small restaurant opposite the California Hotel, and there participated in an informal supper. Robert Louis Stevenson used to dine in that place, and that is why President Jordan, of Stanford University, led the people in and took his chair at the head of the table, with Stevenson's widow on his right, and next to her an aged Frenchman who had come all the way from Monterey for this disinterested tribute to

the great writer, whom he had nursed back to life in his critical illness in San Francisco.

About that table were people who had personal reminiscences to relate of Robert Louis Stevenson. Mrs. Virgil Williams, who, with her husband, had befriended the lonely young writer when he was here in poor health and without money or acquaintances, tearfully read some personal letters from Stevenson, one of whose books is dedicated to this Mrs. Williams and her husband. In these letters, sent from his later Samoan home, Stevenson referred very pathetically to his hardships in 'that, to me, dreary city; that town of sand and fog and deadly breezes,' where he spent the saddest days of his life, a sick man, in dire distress, without money and unknown. But he had a great fondness for San Francisco all the same, and referred to it as the place where he got his wife, for here, with the Williamses as witnesses, he married Mrs. Osbourne while he was yet a boyish man of twenty-nine. Something of the joyous and humorous elements of Stevenson's nature were shown in two other letters read by Miss Annie Ide, to whom Stevenson humorously bequeathed his own birthday because little Miss Ide had been carelessly born on Christmas, and, therefore, was cheated out of a real birthday and its perquisites.[1] In willing her his birthday, November 13, Stevenson was very funny, and in his reply to the little girl's acknowledgment, written eleven years ago, he was even more witty.

Professor Jordan spoke reminiscently of his own impressions of Samoa and the island people, of 'the photographic truthfulness of Stevenson's descriptive writing,' and of a small but beautiful brown and golden speckled Samoan fish which he means to name 'Bilima,' after a little Samoan creek, near where Stevenson lived.

A. M. Sutherland, a native Scotchman, was present at the assemblage, and spoke very entertainingly of Stevenson's personality and the influence of his writings, and Rev. Dr. Ernest E. Baker, of Oakland, dealt with the ethical and literary strength

[1] There would seem to be some confusion on this point, as the *British Weekly* had before this date reported the death in Samoa of 'Miss Adelaide M. Ide,' who, having been born on February 29th, did not have a birthday so often as other little girls, and to whom R. L. S. in a delightful letter bequeathed his own birthday.—ED.

of Stevenson, whom others described as one of the most interesting and charming of conversationalists.

The meeting concluded with a general singing of 'Auld Lang Syne.'

In the *Overland Monthly* (San Francisco), December 1901, the following article on Mr. Graham Balfour's 'Life of Robert Louis Stevenson' was printed, as from the pen of an 'intimate friend of the late R. L. S.':

The 'Life' Reviewed by 'An Intimate Friend.'

There was published in October the authorised 'Life of Robert Louis Stevenson,' by Mr. Graham Balfour. It is in two volumes, uniform with the 'Letters to His Family and Friends' which appeared last year. No other person, with the exception of Mr. Lloyd Osbourne, was so well qualified to undertake the biography of Stevenson, and Mr. Osbourne declined the task, feeling that so intimate a thing as a 'Life' could be written with more freedom and better taste by one outside his immediate family. Mr. Balfour was Stevenson's cousin, and for the last two years and a half lived with him at Vailima. He enjoyed his confidence, in a degree increased by their common isolation from home, old friends, and associates. Mr. Balfour gained an insight into Stevenson's character, and a knowledge of his aims and ambitions, that perhaps none of his contemporaries possessed. He has used his knowledge with discretion, and has accomplished his task with care and appreciation.

Nothing can compare with a good biography in interest and inspiration, but few such have ever been written of men of letters. It is necessarily so, for most writers are wholly absorbed with their work, and their last moments present an outward picture of a man bent over his desk. Johnson, Scott, and Carlyle are notable exceptions to this rule, and to these we must now add the 'Life of Robert Louis Stevenson.' For we have in Mr. Balfour's 'Life' of this most lovable, brilliant, and fascinating man a biography worthy of the subject.

It may be objected that there was no need of a separate biography. The introduction to the 'Letters' is comprehensive and excellent. Stevenson himself, while never practising any of the arts of self-advertising, was extremely frank, open, and auto-

biographical. There is scarcely a period of his life that he has not at least touched upon in his writings. 'A Child's Garden of Verses' is his own childhood. Much of 'Archie' in 'Weir of Hermiston' is himself; the experience of the young man in 'Lay Morals' who would not spend an unnecessary penny of his father's money when he lay sick unto death, because nothing he had yet accomplished justified the expenditure, was his own experience. 'Ordered South' was his convalescence. And, more than these, we have the 'Vailima Letters' and his 'Letters to His Family and Friends.' And there have appeared several other biographies of Stevenson of greater or less merit. No new 'Life' could come as any sort of a revelation. It could give us no new conception of the man. It could only amplify and confirm that which we had before. And that is exactly what Mr. Balfour's 'Life' has done. Not a few passages have been taken bodily from unpublished diaries and bear the Stevenson touch, and sparingly he has quoted from Stevenson's works. But all have been most skilfully dove-tailed with Mr. Balfour's own narrative. The result is most praiseworthy, and the story, if familiar, is so animated and brave that it can never weary the readers in the retelling. Then the lovers of Stevenson are so many, and they are for ever demanding the one word more, and this is Mr. Balfour's justification. . . .

Stevenson's whole life was a brave battle against disease; but it was a splendid fight, conducted with manliness, frankness, and merriment, so that he was a delight and comfort to all about him. And it is none the less to his credit because sometimes he was weary at heart, as his letters to some of his friends reveal. Samoa, if most beautiful and full of much that appealed to Stevenson's romantic disposition, was still a land of exile. It was his friends and his country that he missed. 'The love of country which is in all Scots and beyond all others lies deepest in the Celtic heart,' flowed back upon him again and again with a wave of uncontrollable emotion. When the 'smell of the good wet earth' came to him, it came 'with a kind of Highland tone.' A tropic shower discovered in him 'a frame of mind and body that belonged to Scotland, and particularly to the neighbourhood of Callander.' When he turned to his grandfather's life, he was filled with this yearning, and the beautiful sentences in which he has described the old man's farewell to 'Sumburgh and the wild

crags of Skye' were his own valediction to those shores. . . . It is not to be wondered that his letters show moods of depression which his indomitable spirit prevented him from manifesting at the time to those around him, and which, perhaps, beset him most when he turned to his correspondence.

We have said that ill-health was Stevenson's always, but what he accomplished in the way of letters surpasses in amount and scope that which many a stronger man has done. It amounted to 'nearly four hundred pages a year for twenty years,' and of the conditions under which most of it was done he wrote to Mr. George Meredith in 1893:

'For fourteen years I have not had a day's real health; I have wakened sick and gone to bed weary; and I have done my day unflinchingly. I have written in bed and written out of it; written in hæmorrhages, written in sickness, written torn by coughing, written when my head swam for weakness; and for so long it seems to me I have won my wager and recovered my glove. I am better now, have been, rightly speaking, since first I came to the Pacific; and still few are the days when I am not in some physical distress. And the battle goes on—ill or well is a trifle, so as it goes. I was made for a contest, and the Powers have so willed that my battlefield should be this dingy, inglorious one of the bed and the physic bottle.' . . .

Stevenson was most happy in his death, for he had long feared and dreaded a return to the sick-room. It took him unawares. 'In the hot fit of life, a tip-toe on the highest point of being, he passes at a bound on to the other side. The noise of the mallet and chisel is scarcely quenched, the trumpets are hardly done blowing, when, trailing with him clouds of glory, this happy-starred, full-blooded spirit shoots into the spiritual land.'

One of the most picturesque of the new friends Stevenson found in his South Sea wanderings was Ben Hird, of whom Mr. Graham Balfour wrote a character sketch in *Macmillan's Magazine*, November 1896, under the title 'A South Sea Trader.' A few excerpts are here given:

'To three old shipmates among the Islands, Harry Henderson, Ben Hird, Jack Buckland; their friend R. L. S.' So runs the dedication of the 'Island Nights' Entertainments.' In the

Samoa Times for April 4, 1896, appeared a notice of the death of Mr. B. Hird, 'the well-known supercargo of the *Archer*, who died at the island of Funafuti in the Ellices, and was buried the same day at the island.' Mr. Hird's death, it is added, will be deeply regretted throughout the Pacific Islands, where he was well known and esteemed for his kindly ways, and conscientious dealings with both traders and natives. Perhaps the most widely known figure in the Central Pacific has disappeared with the death of Peni, as Ben Hird was everywhere called by the natives. . . .

'A South Sea Trader.'

Hird was born in Aberdeen about the middle of the century, and after being educated in Scotland, he came to London as a lad to receive a commercial training. We have heard that he enlisted and served for a short time in the cavalry, but was soon bought out. At any rate he came to New Zealand more than five-and-twenty years ago, and took at once to trading in the South Seas. . . . Ultimately he became a partner in the well-known firm at Sydney for which he had worked, and most of his time was spent in visiting their stations.

Hird's tall and burly form was easily recognised; his name of Ben came easily to native tongues, stammering among the many consonants of the English speech; his easy and genial manners gained him many a point where men with less sense of humour, and less instinct for native ways of thought, would have failed. He spoke five or six dialects of Polynesian, and had a smattering of many other of the tongues of the Pacific. . .

Louis Stevenson made a trip of several months' duration in Hird's company, visiting the Ellices, Gilberts, and Marshalls, as well as a number of outlying islands, and to the friendship then commenced the dedication at the head of this article is due. In 'The Beach of Falesa,' also, Ben comes in once or twice without preface or explanation as part of the recognised machinery of island-existence. Well as Stevenson himself could tell a story, he was never tired of studying the methods of other men, and never failed to express his high appreciation of sailors' yarns. Even the bores of his acquaintance were carefully placed under examination lest he too should fall unawares into any of the ways of being tedious. 'I have taken a good deal of pains,' he said one day, 'in analysing ——'s anecdotes, and finding what it is

that makes them so wearisome. It is not mere detail, for *that* sailors of all people introduce in any quantity into their stories, and it is often that which makes them so good; but it is irreverent detail about people who don't really come into the story.' No one's stories commanded more hearty admiration from Stevenson than those of Ben Hird.

From Mr. G. K. Chesterton's review of the 'Life' of R. L. S. in the *Daily News*, 18th October 1901:

G. K. Chesterton on the 'Life.'

When Robert Louis Stevenson was a little boy, Mr. Graham Balfour tells us, he once made the following remark to his mother: 'Mother, I've drawed a man. Shall I draw his soul now?' . . . The only biography that is really possible is autobiography. To recount the actions of another man is not biography, it is zoology, the noting down of the habits of a new and outlandish animal. It may fill ten volumes with anecdotes, without once touching upon his life. It has drawed a man, but it has not drawed his soul.

It seems to me, therefore, that there are only two kinds of books which can be, or should be, published about a man like Stevenson. The first is a biography constructed to serve chiefly as a framework to be filled with his own letters and observations. This is practically autobiography, and it cannot be false. . . . The other kind of book which could be satisfactorily written about Stevenson is the serious sketch or monograph composed by a man who is intellectually and spiritually capable of sketching such a character in the medium of language. To depict Stevenson in sepia and burnt sienna requires a painter; to depict him in adjectives and adverbs requires a novelist. . . . This second type of work, the artistic sketch of Stevenson, would be most valuable and fascinating, but to it one serious condition is attached. Into it, as into every work of art, the personality of the author is bound to creep. Mr. Henley might write an excellent study of Stevenson, but it would only be of the Henleyish part of Stevenson, and it would show a distinct divergence from the finished portrait of the Colvinesque part of Stevenson which would be given by Professor Colvin. The best man of all to write a book like this would be a professional novelist. A subtle and brilliant novelist who was a friend of Stevenson is ready

to our hand, but let us remember that the portrait would not be Stevenson, but a composite photograph of Stevenson and Mr. Henry James.

Since these are the two alternative courses for a biographer of Stevenson, it becomes apparent that Mr. Graham Balfour worked rather at a disadvantage. The essence of the first kind of book, the pile of correspondence amounting to an autobiography, had been already achieved by Professor Colvin's sumptuous and delightful collection of the Stevenson Letters. It is true that Mr. Graham Balfour is able to add to this a great many most interesting extracts from Stevenson's Diary, but these scarcely reach the same level. In the case of so sociable a soul as Stevenson, wit and truth poured out a hundred times quicker for human contact; his tipsiest jests and his most clamorous arguments were more true than the most secret soliloquy. On the other hand, though he writes with vividness and dignity, he makes no pretence, of course, to be the literary artist who should draw Stevenson as Stevenson drew Alan Breck. Thus handicapped for both purposes, his book, though packed with readable matter and genuine biographical ability, falls under one of the worst curses that can attaint a book, the curse which Stevenson himself would have regarded as peculiarly ruinous and final, the curse which leaves both author and reader in considerable doubt as to what kind of book it is meant to be. . . .

Professor Colvin's collection of the Letters was a thoroughly satisfactory representation, a representation marked with admirable tact and selection of Stevenson's own version of himself. If Mr. Graham Balfour is aiming at the same mark, he scarcely hits it so neatly. If, on the other hand, his work is conceived as a personal and independent study, the case is more complex. . . .

Stevenson is a peculiarly difficult man for any biographer to estimate fairly. The reason lies in the fact that his personality was, as it were, singularly light and slippery, and that this slipperiness and levity arose not from eccentricity, but from a swift and unconquerable common sense. We are so rooted in open and systematic morbidities, in inhuman prejudices, in respectable monomanias, that a sane man terrifies us all like a lunatic. To us sense seems as illusive as imagination; intellectual temperance seems something wilder than excess. Stevenson was peculiarly an

embodiment of this elfish sanity. He is continually startling us in his letters, not because his remarks are peculiar, but because they are a little more sensible than anything we had ever thought of. . . .

It is said in some quarters that Stevenson has been over-praised, that a reaction has set in against him, that he will not fascinate the next generation. It matters not one rap whether he does or not to any one who has perceived his absolute solidity and his eternal use to mankind. . . . Stevenson will win, not because he has friends or admirers or the approval of the public or the assent of the æsthetes. He will win because he is *right*—a word of great practical import which needs to be rediscovered. He may or may not be eclipsed for a time; it would be a truer way of putting it to say that the public may or may not be eclipsed for a time. . . . The idea that a great literary man who has said something novel and important to mankind can vanish suddenly and finally is ridiculous. The pessimists who believe it are people who could believe that the sun is destroyed for ever every time it sinks in the west. Nothing is lost in the magnificent economy of existence; the sun returns, the flowers return, the literary fashions return. If life is a continual parting, it is also a continual heaven of reconciliation. The old legends were right when they said that Arthur should come back, and Christ should rise again. All things return; the world uses all its forces, the return of the stars, the return of the seasons, the return of the heroes.

The sale of the original manuscript of Stevenson's 'The Body-Snatcher' recalls several remarkable things in connection with that tale. One was that the author returned a portion of the honorarium, on the ground that it was excessive.

'The Body-Snatcher.'

The story was written to order for the *Pall Mall Gazette*. It wanted a Christmas story 'with a thrill in it,' and applied to Stevenson. It is an odd idea, by the way, and one which measures the distance travelled since Dickens, that merry Christmas had come to be just the time to read of ghouls and graveyards. It may be our growing love of contrasts. Anyhow, the *Pall Mall* requested Stevenson to give it something to make its readers' flesh creep, and he first sent a murder story, 'Markheim.' This, for some reason, did not sup full enough on

horrors, and, after some correspondence, Stevenson promised to send a tale which would 'freeze the blood of a Grenadier.' It was 'The Body-Snatcher.' The *Pall Mall* advertised it in the streets in a way as horrible as the story itself. 'Six plaster skulls were made by a theatrical property man. Six pairs of coffin-lids, painted dead black, with white skulls and cross-bones in the centre for relief, were supplied by a carpenter. Six long white surplices were purchased from a funeral establishment. Six sandwich-men were hired at double rates.' The rest can be guessed. But the police suppressed the nuisance.—*Current Literature* (New York).

From the London Letter by 'H. B'[1] in the New York *Critic*, May 21, 1887:

'Deacon Brodie.'

I have read—with very natural interest—some of the criticisms on Messrs. Henley and Stevenson's 'Deacon Brodie,' produced a week or two ago at Wallack's Theatre; and I have been struck by the unanimity with which their authors refer the origin of the piece to 'The House on the Marsh' and 'Jim the Penman,' or even to the career of the heroic Peace. It is hardly worth remarking, of course, but it is a fact that (as I have excellent means of knowing) 'Deacon Brodie' has existed, in one form or another, for a considerable number of years, and was seen in three dimensions before Miss Warden published her novel, I believe, and assuredly before Sir Charles Young produced his play. To this I may add that it has as little to do with the late Charles Peace as with his predecessor, the renowned Jack Sheppard. The principal character is historical. There really was a William Brodie, Deacon of the Wrights; he was a master burglar by night, and by day a citizen whose influence was weighty and wide enough to turn (so it is said) the scale of a parliamentary election. Jean Watt, too, was a real person; and Humphrey Moore, George Smith, and Andrew Ainslie all existed, all served the Deacon, and were all in trouble with their master. He, I should note, experienced the fate of his kind. He escaped to Holland; revealed his whereabouts by an unwary inquiry as to the results of certain cock-fights; was pursued, captured (in a cupboard), brought back,

[1] 'H.B.' is generally understood to have been Mr. W. E. Henley.

tried, and finally hanged upon a drop into the construction of which, it is said, he had introduced, as a good carpenter might, a certain ingenious improvement. You may find the story of his life in Kay's 'Edinburgh,' and also in the record of his trial—the plethoric little volume which was printed and sold at the time of his translation. Both are embellished with etched portraits by the aforesaid Kay; and if Kay was not a libeller, then must Deacon Brodie—who in one is pictured in his prison-cell, seated at a table decorated with cards and dice—have been a gentleman of unpleasant aspect.' For the rest, the *idée mère* of the play—the scene, that is to say, in which the Deacon is caught and unmasked in the act of breaking his friend's house—is to be found in Mr. Stevenson's 'Edinburgh,' in the shape of a tradition—or a fact, I forget which—still popular and still credible. In the version of his adventures which was produced (at a *matinée*) at the Prince's Theatre some three or four years ago, he 'cut up ugly' in the end, and died in a madness of denunciation and despair—a piece of 'realism' revolting to the human mind. In the new version produced at Wallack's, he takes (as I understand) another road, gives way to sentiment, and commits suicide by way of expiation. It is odd, though not unnatural, that both these solutions should have been condemned. The first was found disgusting; the second is set down as unveracious and conventional. I need hardly remark that, to my poor judgment, both sets of critics are right; or that a handsome reward will probably be his who will discover to the authors how to end their drama in any other fashion.

In Mr. Harry Quilter's *What's What* there appears this note on Stevenson's 'Bottle Imp':

'The Bottle Imp.'

We do not remember having seen it stated in any memoir of Robert Louis Stevenson, or in any critical estimate of his genius, that one of the most striking of his tales is, so far as the invention is concerned, borrowed from a popular German story. It seems hardly credible that the circumstance should have been unknown to the critics of Stevenson, the title of the story being already almost proverbial before he was born. Who has not heard of the 'Bottle Imp,' and who has not admired the ingenuity of the

invention by which the fiend must pass from hand to hand at a constantly decreasing price, until at length the lowest conceivable coin is reached, and the last possessor, unable to find any one to relieve him of his burden, becomes the demon's slave? If the failure to point out the absolute identity of Stevenson's central incident with that of his anonymous German predecessor is due to any fear of seeming to charge him with plagiarism, such apprehension is uncalled for. The more notorious the original, the less scruple would he or need he feel to avail himself of it. He might as well have been accused of plagiarising Bluebeard, had he, like Tieck, founded a romance upon the old popular tradition. In fact, he has added to his reputation by manifesting his power of enriching and embellishing material already excellent. The comparison of the comparatively simple 'Bottle Imp' of the popular German story-book with Stevenson's version of it in his 'Island Nights' Entertainments' is most instructive as an example of the transplantation of a literary growth to a new environment. The core of the old story remains; this is essential; were it to be tampered with, the tale would lose all point. But every external detail is utterly different; instead of Europeans we have South Sea Islanders, instead of the cities of the old world, ships, corals, and cocoa-nuts. While the demand on the imaginative faculty is thus much greater, the moral significance of the tale is rendered far deeper by the revelation of intellectual struggles, and of a psychology which never entered into the mind of the old writer. We could hardly have a stronger illustration of the complexity of modern thought than the development of the simple original thought in a modern mind. Man, it is clear, continues to bite at the fruit which bestows the knowledge of the difference between good and evil.

Apropos 'Vailima Letters.'

The account of an interview with Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson, published in a San Francisco paper, is somewhat distressing reading. It raises over again the old question of the prudence of publishing a dead man's letters, when his widow is still alive, without her sanction. Mrs. Stevenson says that her late husband's friends —if such she still holds them to be—have hastened to make money out of the scraps and scrawls he sent them. The charge

reads as an ugly one. But a moment's reflection supplies its modifications. Has Mr. Henley rushed into the market-place with his dead friend's letters? Has Mr. Charles Baxter? That was the old trio renowned in song and famous in fable. Of the newer friends—friends such as those he made in Bournemouth, Lady Shelley and the Misses Ashworth Taylor, the most attached a man ever had—not one has brought out of his or her treasury the delightful letters of 'R. L. S.' We have the 'Vailima Letters,' it is true, but surely these must be published by the consent of Mrs. Stevenson and at her profit? We had also that letter which Mr. Gosse sent to the *Times*. And, as for that, it was obviously given and not 'sold.' In this particular letter, which was written in acknowledgment of a dedication of Mr. Gosse's poems to him, Stevenson congratulated his correspondent on the prospect of an old age mitigated by the society of his descendants. To heighten the picture, the man who had learned his craft so well, and could hardly elude it in his least-considered letters, introduced his own figure as a sort of foil—he was childless. That word, uttered with regret, has, perhaps, a pang which the heart of the widow might imagine she should be spared. Again, in one of the 'Vailima Letters,' Stevenson refers to having been happy only once in his life, and that, too, on the chance of its misinterpretation, may be ashes in Mrs. Stevenson's mouth. Yet who does not know 'R. L. S.' as a man of moods? He is that, and nothing else, in some of his letters. And no chance phrase of his will ever be read to the discredit of Mrs. Stevenson—she may take the English reader's oath on that.—*The Sketch.*

The following valuable chapter of Stevensoniana appeared in the *Bookbuyer* (New York), February 1895:

A most interesting article might be made by collecting the dedications which Robert Louis Stevenson printed at the beginning of his books, to Sidney Colvin, to William Ernest Henley, to Will H. Low, to Charles Baxter, to Mrs. Cunningham, to Paul Bourget, to 'the Critic on the Hearth,' and to others perhaps less widely known, but whose place in Stevenson's affections was not less certain and well-defined. It was characteristic

of the spontaneous kindliness of his nature to write with his own hand, also, in books which he gave to his friends, those familiar dedications which, when now re-read, seem to convey the very voice and gentle presence of the man. A number of such personal inscriptions are now counted among the treasured possessions of their owners.

The Trudeau Dedications.

Stevenson spent part of the years 1887 and 1888 at the home of Doctor E. L. Trudeau, at Saranac Lake, where he went in his quest of health. After leaving the Adirondacks, he commissioned Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, his publishers, to bind up a complete set of his books, in uniform size and style, for presentation to Dr. Trudeau; and wrote upon a fly-leaf, to be bound into each book, 'Doctor Trudeau's Complete Set, From the Author,' and in addition some characteristic scrap of verse or prose in dedication, in each instance signed 'R. L. S.' These dedications, hitherto unpublished, are printed below, with the courteous permission of Doctor Trudeau:

'A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSES'

—To win your lady (it, alas! it may be),
Let 's couple this one with the name of
Baby!

'TREASURE ISLAND'

I could not choose a patron for each one:
But *this* perhaps is chiefly for your son.

'KIDNAPPED'

—Here is the one sound page of all my writing,
The one I 'm proud of, and that I delight in.

'DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE'

Trudeau was all the winter at my side:
I never spied the nose of Mr. Hyde.

'UNDERWOODS'

Some day or other ('tis a general curse)
The wisest author stumbles into verse.

'THE DYNAMITER'

As both my wife and I composed the thing,
Let 's place it under Mrs. Trudeau's wing.

'MEMORIES AND PORTRAITS'

Greeting to all your household, small and big,
In this one instance, not forgetting—Nig!

'THE MERRY MEN'

If just to read the tale you should be able,
I would not bother to make out the fable.

'TRAVELS WITH A DONKEY'

It blew, it rained, it thawed, it snowed, it thundered—
Which was the Donkey? I have often wondered!

'PRINCE OTTO'

This is my only love-tale, this Prince Otto,
Which some folks like to read and others *not* to.

'MEMOIR OF FLEEMING JENKIN'

The preface mighty happy to get back
To its inclement birth-place, Saranac!

'FAMILIAR STUDIES OF MEN AND BOOKS'

My other works are of a slighter kind:
Here is the party to improve your MIND!

'AN INLAND VOYAGE'

My dear Trudeau, there is not one
Other rhyme left in me, so please
Accept in prose the assurance of my
Gratitude and friendship.

'VIRGINIBUS PUERISQUE'

I have no art to please a lady's mind.
Here's the least acid spot,
'Miss Trudeau, of the lot.
If you 'd just *try* this volume, 'twould be kind!

'NEW ARABIAN NIGHTS'

No need to put a verse on this; I dipped
Into it, and see p. 39.

[At page 39 the compositor has spelled devilry 'deviltry,' which the author objects to as follows:]

I will stand being misspelled; but not this *reveltry*
Of nonsense. Deviltry! ! ! ! ! ! O Devilry!

The set was composed of fifteen volumes, in the original covers of various sizes. When bound by Mr. Henry Blackwell, to whom the work was intrusted, the set was made of uniform size by stilting the boards of the smaller volumes to the size of the largest. Mr. Stevenson was particular to designate the exact style in which the volumes were to be bound, *i.e.* in half-white vellum, grey tint sides, white end-papers, edges absolutely uncut, showing white edges all around. All the volumes were lettered at the top of the back, in black ink, 'Dr. Trudeau's Set,' and in the centre of the back, in black ink, appeared a single word of the title, *e.g.* Kidnapped, Otto, Jenkin, Garden, Donkey, Treasure, Virginibus, Memories. This work was done in 1888.

Anecdote of Childhood by R.L.S.

Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson was the guest of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales at Sydney, on March 18th. In a felicitous speech, Mr. Stevenson said that his grandfather and great-grandfather were ministers—the latter being Dr. Smith of Galston, referred to by Robert Burns, 'Smith opens out his cauld harangues.' His great-uncle, John Smith, first of Glasgow, then of Helensburgh, was 'the most absolute child of the church that perhaps ever lived.' He appeared in the General Assembly as a ruling elder every year. Once,

when Mr. Stevenson was a very young and sickly child, Mr. Smith came up to the Assembly as usual. 'I was lying in bed at the time, but with his infinite good nature, before going to the Assembly he came up to see me. He had a little conversation with me, and then when it was time to go to the Assembly, I shook my finger at him and said, "Now, Uncle John, if you will take my advice you will have nothing to do with that man Lee." This picture of the infant monitor sitting up in bed and shaking his finger at his great-uncle, I think my unseen friend and most admired colleague, Mr. Barrie, might have ticketed "An Auld Licht Idyll."'—*British Weekly*, April 1893.

An Historic Inkstand.

With an inscription to attest its genuineness, Mr. Henley has contributed to the *Daily Mail* 'Absent-Minded Beggar Fund' the inkstand which was used by R. L. Stevenson during two years of his wanderings in the Pacific. It passed into Mr. Henley's hands at Stevenson's death. So far £15 has been bid for it.—*Academy*, 24th March 1900.'

Stevenson's Delusion.

It is a strange delusion, which the telegram from New Zealand tells us of, in announcing the death of Robert Louis Stevenson, that of his idea that the popularity of his writings was waning. No fancy could be further from the fact than this. To illustrate what the truth is about the works of this great writer, let us relate an incident which occurred in a well-known bookstore in New York only a week before the death of Robert Louis Stevenson had been heard of in this part of the world. A lover and buyer of good books was talking with a bookseller of exceptional knowledge, experience, and literary taste in respect to the collector's success in the past in picking up books from time to time at reasonable prices, which subsequently advanced in value until many of them had come to be regarded as veritable book-buyers' prizes. 'I wish you could give me some advice as to what to buy now,' he continued, 'which would turn out as well as my own notions of fifteen or twenty years ago.'

'I do not feel sure about many things,' responded the book-

man, 'but I am quite confident that I am not mistaken about the books of one author. Buy first editions of Robert Louis Stevenson. He will rank as the first story-writer of our time. I see constant evidence of the increasing appreciation in which his works are held. That esteem will constantly increase, and the forms in which his writings were first given to the public will be valued more and more by book-collectors as time goes on. The man who buys first editions of Robert Louis Stevenson now, even at the prices at which some of them are held, will make no mistake.' If Robert Louis Stevenson had but known it, his distinction as a writer was never greater than just before his death, when he feared his popularity was waning.—*New York Sun*, December 17, 1894.

Some idea of the intense public interest in Stevenson's personality which continued in America for several years after his death may be gathered from the following article, entitled 'A Stevenson Shrine,' written by Mrs. Emily Soldene, the famous actress, turned journalist, and published in *The Sketch*, February 26, 1896:

A Stevenson Shrine in San Francisco.

In 1896 I strolled down Market Street, San Francisco, looking into the curio and other shops under the Palace Hotel, when my attention was attracted by a crowd of people round one particular shop-window. Now, a crowd in San Francisco (except on political occasions) is an uncommon sight. Naturally, with the curiosity of my sex and the perseverance of the Anglo-Saxon, I took my place in the surging mass, and patiently waited till the course of events, and the shoulders of my surroundings, brought me up close to the point of vantage. What came they out for to see? It was a bookseller's window. In the window was a shrine. 'THE WORKS AND PORTRAITS OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON,' proclaimed a placard all illuminated and embossed with red and purple and green and gold. In the centre of the display was an odd-looking document. This, then, was the loadstone—a letter of Stevenson's, in Stevenson's own handwriting. Many people stood and read, then turned away, sad and sorrowful-looking. 'Poor fellow!' said one

woman. 'But he's all right now. I guess he's got more than he asked for.' I stood, too, and read. Before I had finished, my eyes, unknowingly, were full of tears. This is the document. When you have read, you will not wonder at the tears.

'I think now, this 5th or 6th of April 1873, that I can see my future life. I think it will run stiller and stiller year by year, a very quiet, desultorily studious existence. If God only gives me tolerable health, I think now I shall be very happy: work and science calm the mind, and stop gnawing in the brain; and as I am glad to say that I do now recognise that I shall never be a great man, I may set myself peacefully on a smaller journey, not without hope of coming to the inn before nightfall.

O dass mein leben
Nach diesem Ziel ein ewig Wandeln sey!'

I walked on a block or so, and after a few minutes, when I thought my voice was steady and under control, turned back, went into the bookstore, and asked the young man in attendance, 'Could I be allowed to take a copy of the letter in the window?' He told me it was not, as I thought, an original document, but the printed reproduction of a memorandum found among the dead Stevenson's papers. 'Then,' said I, 'can I not have one—can I not buy one?' And the young man shook his head. 'No; they are not for sale.' 'Oh, I am sorry!' said I. 'I would have given anything for one.' 'Well,' said he, in a grave voice, and with a grave smile, 'they are not, indeed, for sale; but have been printed for a particular purpose, and one will be *given* to all lovers of Stevenson.' He spoke in such a low, reverent, sympathetic tone, that I *knew* his eyes must be full, and so I would not look.

Next day I went to see Mr. Doxey himself, who is a Stevenson enthusiast, and has one window (the window of the crowd) devoted entirely to Stevenson. All his works, all his editions—including the Edinburgh Edition—are there; and he, with the greatest kindness, showed me the treasures he had collected. In the first place, the number of portraits was astonishing. Years and conditions and circumstances, all various and changing; but the face—the face always the same. The eyes, wonderful in their keenness, their interrogative, questioning, eager gaze; the

looking out, always looking out, always asking, looking ahead, far away into some distant land not given to *les autres* to perceive. That wonderful looking out was the first thing that impressed me when I met Mr. Stevenson in Sydney in '93. Unfortunately for us, he only stayed there a short time, would not visit, was very difficult of access, not at all well, and when he went seemed to disappear, not go. Mr. Doxey had pictures of him in every possible phase—in turn-down collar, in no collar at all; his hair long, short, and middling; in oils, in water-colour, in photos; in a smoking-cap and Imperial; with a moustache, without a moustache; young, youthful, dashing, Byronic; not so youthful, middle-aged; looking in *this* like a modern Manfred; in *that* like an epitome of the fashions, wearing a debonair demeanour and a *dégagé* tie; as a boy, as a barrister; on horseback, in a boat. There was a portrait taken by Mrs. Stevenson in 1885, and one lent by Virgil Williams; another, a water-colour, lent by Miss O'Hara; and a wonderful study of his wonderful hands. Then he was photographed in his home at Samoa, surrounded by his friends and his faithful, devoted band of young men, his Samoan followers; in the royal boat-house at Honolulu, seated side by side with his Majesty King Kalakaua; on board the *Casco*. Here, evidently anxious for a really good picture, he has taken off his hat, standing in the sun bareheaded. At a native banquet, surrounded by all the delicacies of the season, bowls of *kava*, *poi*, *palo-sami*, and much good company. Then the later ones at Vailima; in the clearing close to his house, in the verandah. Later still, writing in his bed. Coming to the 'inn' he talks about in 1873—coming so close, close, unexpectedly, but not unprepared—Robert Louis Stevenson has passed the veil. Not dead, but gone before, he lives in the hearts of all people. But not so palpably, so outwardly, so proudly, as in the hearts of these people of the Sunny Land, who, standing on the extreme verge of the Western world, shading their eyes from the shining glory, watch the sunshine go out through the Golden Gate, out on its way across the pearly Pacific to the lonely mountain of Samoa where lies the body of the man 'Tusitala,' whose songs and lessons and stories fill the earth, and the souls of the people thereof.

Sir James Balfour Paul (a relation of R. L. S.), Lyon-King-of-Arms, contributed the following note on the portraits of Stevenson to *The Athenæum*, September 7, 1895. Sir James has kindly revised it for the present volume:

Note on Stevenson's Portraits.

It may be interesting, and not altogether without use, to put on record a note of the portraits of this author which have been made at different periods of his life. As he himself acknowledged, he was a difficult subject to paint, and the consequence is that there is not in existence any thoroughly satisfactory likeness of Stevenson. So far as I have been able to ascertain, there are only two finished portraits of him. One is a small full-length by J. S. Sargent, A.R.A., painted at Bournemouth in 1885, and now in the possession of Mrs. Fairchild, of Boston. This portrait is said to verge on caricature, to be 'a little more living than life,' and has been compared by one very competent to judge to a *Vanity Fair* cartoon. The other is a portrait by Signor Nerli painted in Samoa in 1892; there is a poor reproduction of it in the *Cosmopolitan Magazine* for last July. In addition to the above there is an unfinished oil portrait, not much more than laid on in two sittings, by W. B. Richmond, R.A. This was painted about 1885-6, and is now in the possession of the artist.

In sculpture there is a somewhat greater variety:

1. A large bronze medallion by Augustus St. Gaudens, executed in New York in 1888—a very characteristic work, representing Stevenson in bed propped up by pillows. The face is in profile, and is considered a pretty good likeness. The medallion is now in Mr. Sidney Colvin's possession.

2. A bust done at Honolulu comparatively recently by Allan Hutchinson. It was exhibited this season in the New Gallery, but cannot be considered a good specimen of the sculptor's art, being but a ghastly thing and disagreeable to look on.

3. A bust done at Sydney, believed to be by a French artist.

4. A medallion done at Honolulu.

The last two have not been seen in this country.

In addition to the above there are a few drawings. One by J. W. Alexander appeared in 1888 in the *Century Magazine*;

another was drawn by William Strang at Bournemouth, and from it an etching was executed.

There are, then, it may be said, three adequate representations of Stevenson—two portraits, one by Nerli and one by Sargent, and the St. Gaudens medallion. The Nerli portrait is apparently the better of the two former—at least Stevenson himself declared it to be the best likeness ever painted of him, and several of his friends who have seen it say that, though perhaps not altogether what may be termed a pleasant likeness, it is probably a faithful representation of him as he appeared towards the end of his life. There are others, however, who also knew Stevenson well, who hold a contrary opinion, and say that it is not a good likeness—a diversity of opinion which, as we all know, occurs in the case of the majority of portraits that are painted.

The history of the Nerli portrait is peculiar. After being exhibited for some time in New Zealand it was bought, in the course of this year, by a lady who was travelling there, for a hundred guineas. She then offered it for that sum to the Scottish National Portrait Gallery; but the Trustees of Board of Manufactures—that oddly named body to which is entrusted the fostering care of art in Scotland, and, in consequence, the superintendence of the National Portrait Gallery—have not seen their way to accept the offer. Some surprise has been expressed at the action of the Trustees in thus declining to avail themselves of the opportunity of obtaining the portrait of one of the most distinguished Scotsmen of recent times. It can hardly be for want of money, for though the funds at the disposal of the Trustees for the purchase of ordinary works of art are but limited, it was no longer ago than last year that they were the recipients of a very handsome legacy from the late Mr. J. M. Gray, the accomplished and much lamented curator of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery—a legacy left them for the express purpose of acquiring portraits of distinguished Scotsmen, and the income of which was amply sufficient to have enabled them to purchase this portrait. One is therefore almost shut up to the conclusion that the Trustees were influenced in their decision by one of the two following reasons:—

1. That they did not consider Stevenson worthy of a place in

the Gallery. This is a position so incomprehensible and so utterly opposed to public sentiment that one can hardly credit its having been the cause of their refusal. Whatever may be the place which Stevenson may ultimately take as an author, and however opinions may differ as to the merit of his work, no one can deny that he was one of the most popular writers of his day, and that as a mere master of style, if for nothing else, his works will be read so long as there are students of English literature. Surely the portrait of one for whom such a claim may legitimately be made cannot be considered altogether unworthy of a place in the national collection, as one of Scotland's most distinguished sons.

2. The only other reason which can be suggested as having weighed with the Trustees in their decision is one which in some cases might be held to be worthy of consideration. It is conceivable that in the case of some men the Trustees might be of opinion that there was plenty of time to consider the matter, and that in the meantime there was always the chance of some generous donor presenting them with a portrait. But, as has been shown above, the portraits of Stevenson are practically confined to two: one of these is in America, and there is not the least chance of its ever coming here; the other they have just refused. And as it is understood that the Trustees have a rule that they do not accept any portrait which has not been painted from the life, they preclude themselves from acquiring a copy of any existing picture, or even a portrait done from memory.

It is rumoured that the Nerli portrait may ultimately find a resting-place in the national collection of portraits in London. If this should prove to be the case, what a commentary on the old saying, 'A prophet is not without honour save in his own country!'

Another Sargent (probably a replica of the first) is in the possession of Mrs. R. L. Stevenson.

The National Portrait Gallery (London) bought in 1899 a pencil sketch of his head by Percy Spence: *see* Illustrated Catalogue.

D. W. Stevenson, sculptor, had a full-length statuette in the Scottish Academy of 1902, but it was not from the life.

Among the most recent additions to Stevensoniana is the following note on a privately printed budget of letters by R. L. S. It appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, May 1, 1903:

Stevenson's Letters to an Artist.

To all lovers of Robert Louis Stevenson, the news that a few more of their favourite's letters have been preserved within the printed page will be welcome. But it will be less welcome to them to learn that in all probability none but the favoured few will ever have an opportunity to read those epistles in their entirety. Five in number, they have been printed in New York, and two copies, with their daintily-tinted backs and exquisite type, are known to have reached English shores. One is in the possession of Mr. Edmund Gosse; the other is in the Ashley Library, where Mr. Wise has kindly permitted the following summary to be effected.

The letters were indited to Mr. Trevor Haddon, the painter, some twenty-three years ago, and if there was one thing more than another calculated to bring out the human inwardness of R. L. S., it was the inspiration provoked by the knowledge that the addressee was a young man just entering upon life, with all its potentialities and all its pitfalls.

'By your "fate" (he says) I believe I meant your marriage, or that love at least which may befall any one of us at the shortest notice, and overthrow the most settled habits and opinions. I call that your fate, because then, if not before, you can no longer hang back, but must stride out into life and act.'

Later we have a sermonette bristling with worldly wisdom:

'No man can settle another's life for him. It is the test of the nature and courage of each that he shall decide it for himself. Some things, however, I may say: Go not out of your way to make difficulties. Hang back from life while you are young. Shoulder no responsibilities. You do not know how far you can trust yourself; it will not be very far, or you are more fortunate than I am.'

The letter ends with: 'Wishing you well in life and art, and that you may long be young,' and that wish was the touching utterance of a heart ageing with disease. At a later date, writing

from Campagne Defli, he cries, 'I have been "the sheer hulk" to a degree almost outside of my experience.'

The fourth letter, written from Clermont Ferrand, in July 1893, on learning of the young aspirant's success in painting, is of brotherly kindness from a craftsman in kindred art. We cannot do less than print in full his 'Notes for the Student of any Art':

'1. Keep an intelligent eye upon *all* the others. It is only by doing so that you come to see what Art is. Art is the end common to them all; it is none of the points by which they differ.

'2. In this age beware of realism.

'3. In your own art, bow your head over technique. Think of technique when you rise and when you go to bed. Forget purposes in the meanwhile; get to love technical processes, to glory in technical successes; get to see the world entirely through technical spectacles, to see it entirely in terms of what you can do. Then when you have anything to say, the language will be apt and copious.

'4. See the good in other people's work; it will never be yours. See the bad in your own, and don't cry about it; it will be there always. Try to use your faults; at any rate, use your knowledge of them, and don't run your head against stone walls. Art is not like theology; nothing is forced. You have to represent with pleasure and effect, and the only way to find out what that is, is by technical exercise.'

In the last of the five there is a note of sadness: the author, his sight failing, is waiting for his wife's return that she may read aloud his correspondent's last letter. Meanwhile, his pen moves across the sheet. 'I wish I could read "Treasure Island"; I believe I should like it. But work done for the Artist is the Golden Goose killed: you sell its feathers and lament the eggs.' Then later:

'Please to recognise that you are unworthy of all that befalls you. . . . And if you know any man who believes himself to be worthy of a wife's love, a friend's affection, a mistress's caress, even if venal, you may rest assured he is worthy of nothing but a kicking. I fear men who have no open faults; what do they conceal? We are not meant to be good in this world, but to try to be, and fail, and keep on trying; and when we get a cake to say, "Thank God," and when we get a buffet to say, "Just so:

well hit!" . . . Pity sick children and the individual poor man, not the mass. Don't pity anybody else, and never pity fools.'

M. Henry D. Davray contributed to *La Revue Hebdomadaire*, April 1903, a short paper on 'Robert Louis Stevenson in France.' It is of considerable value to Stevensonians, as the writer is able to print for the first time two letters written in French by Stevenson to Rodin, the sculptor for whose genius he had a lively admiration. M. Davray has also some noteworthy remarks on the French reading public's knowledge of Stevenson's works. He begins as follows:

R. L. S. and Rodin.

'Il y a certains auteurs dont l'œuvre est d'une portée vraiment universelle, et Stevenson est de ceux-là, comme était Dickens avant lui,' dit M. Teodor de Wyzewa, dans un essai qu'il consacre 'au plus parfait conteur de la littérature contemporaine.' Et l'éminent critique se plaint de ce qu'on n'ait pas donné encore au public français une version intelligente des œuvres de R. L. Stevenson. 'Nous l'aurons lu tout entier sans nous douter de son génie; et le plaisir même que nous aurons eu à le lire, dans des traductions faites tout juste pour nous divertir un moment, ce plaisir même nous empêchera de reconnaître sa haute valeur littéraire: de sorte que nous continuerons à réclamer à tous les vents de nouveaux grands écrivains étrangers, et que nous admirerons de confiance tous ceux qu'on imaginera de nous exhiber, tandis que nous tiendrons pour un agréable auteur de romans-feuilletons le seul écrivain de notre temps, peut-être, qui, grâce à son génie d'enfant, ait exprimé des sentiments capables d'être universellement compris et goûtés.'

En conséquence, sans doute, de son admiration pour le génial conteur, M. de Wyzewa vient de publier une traduction de *Saint Yves*, œuvre posthume de R. L. Stevenson dans laquelle sont narrées les aventures d'un prisonnier français en Angleterre. On ne saurait trop conseiller aux amateurs de bonne littérature de rester *on the look out*, aux aguets, de crainte de laisser passer sans la lire la traduction de l'érudit transcripteur de la *Légende dorée*. Récemment a paru une version française de *Kidnapped*, sous ce titre : *les Aventures de David Balfour*; presque en même temps

un autre éditeur publiait *la Flèche noire*, un des romans les plus captivants de Stevenson, où revivent des personnages historiques qu'anima autrefois le génie de Shakespeare. A propos de ce dernier ouvrage, on trouve dans la *Correspondance* de Stevenson, qu'a publiée M. Sidney Colvin, quelques lettres adressées à M. Marcel Schwob, qui avait demandé à Stevenson l'autorisation de traduire *la Flèche noire*. Dans l'une d'elles, datée d'Union-Club, Sydney, 19 août 1890, l'auteur critique son œuvre de la façon la plus judicieuse et la plus amusante, et finalement M. Schwob renonça au travail qu'il se proposait pour se consacrer plus librement à ses recherches sur François Villon, dont il vient enfin d'écrire une *Vie* entièrement basée sur de nouveaux documents.

Une des causes pour lesquelles Stevenson reste ignoré du public français est assurément que les diverses traductions faites de ses ouvrages sont éparsées sur les catalogues de maisons d'éditions diverses. Quel lecteur sait qu'il peut lire en volume : *les Nouvelles Mille et une nuits*, *le Roman du prince Othon*, *le Cas étrange du Dr. Jekyll et de Mr. Hyde*, *le Dynamiteur*, *les Aventures de David Balfour*, *l'Ile au trésor*, *Suicide-Club*, *A la pagaie*, *la Flèche noire* ? Rien d'étonnant à ce que ces volumes passent inaperçus et que R. L. S., . . . comme on l'appelle communément en Angleterre, demeure ignoré dans cette France qu'il connaissait pourtant si bien.

M. Davray then proceeds to sketch out briefly and accurately Stevenson's life, noting especially his many visits to and periods of residence in France, and quoting his amusing half-French half-English letter written to his mother from Spring Grove School, in November 1863. M. Davray reminds us that, after settling at Bournemouth in 1884 on his return from Hyères, Stevenson made a short visit to Paris to see his friend Auguste Rodin, who had made a splendid bust of their common friend Mr. W. E. Henley, and who purposed also setting to work on a bust of R. L. S., a project unhappily never realised. M. Davray continues :

C'est dans les années 1885 et 1886 qu'il faut placer les deux

lettres suivantes adressées par Robert Louis Stevenson à Auguste Rodin et qui ne portent pas de date exacte. Elles ne figurent pas dans les deux énormes volumes de la correspondance de Stevenson et nous les publions ici pour la première fois, grâce à la généreuse obligeance de M. Rodin. Elles sont écrites en français, et, malgré les amusantes incorrections dont elles fourmillent, elles dénotent de réels progrès chez l'élève qui écrivait le billet que nous citons plus haut. M. Rodin avait envoyé à son ami une copie en plâtre de son groupe *le Printemps*, et Stevenson lui en accuse réception.

'SKERRYVORE, BOURNEMOUTH.

'MON CHER AMI,—Il y a bien longtemps déjà que je vous dois des lettres par dizaines, mais bien que je vais mieux, je ne vais toujours que doucement. Il a fallu faire le voyage à Bournemouth comme une fuite en Égypte par crainte des brouillards qui me tuaient et j'en ressentais beaucoup de fatigue. Mais maintenant cela commence à aller et je puis vous donner de mes nouvelles. Le printemps est arrivé, mais il avait le bras cassé et nous l'avons laissé lors de notre fuite aux soins d'un médecin-de-statues. Je l'attends de jour en jour et ma maisonnette en resplendira bientôt; je regrette beaucoup le dédicace; peut-être quand vous viendrez nous voir ne serait-il pas trop tard de l'ajouter? Je n'en sais rien; je l'espère. L'œuvre c'est pour tout le monde, le dédicace est pour moi. L'œuvre est un cadeau trop beau; c'est le mot d'amitié qui me le donne pour de bon. Je suis si bête que je m'embrouille et me perd et vous me comprendriez, je pense.

'Je ne puis même pas m'exprimer en anglais, comment voudriez-vous que je le ferais en français? Plus heureux que vous le Nemesis des arts ne me visite pas sous le masque du désenchantement; elle me suce l'intelligence et me laisse bayant les corneilles, sans capacité, mais sans regret; sans espérance, c'est vrai, mais aussi, cher merci, sans désespoir. Un doux étonnement me tient, je ne m'habitue pas à me trouver si bûche, mais je m'y résigne; même si cela durait ce ne serait pas désagréable, mais comme je mourrais certainement de faim, ce serait tout au moins regrettable pour moi et ma famille.

'Je voudrais pouvoir vous écrire, mais ce n'est pas moi qui

tiens la plume, c'est l'autre, le bête, celui qui ne connaît pas le français, celui qui n'aime pas mes amis comme je les aime, qui ne goûte pas aux choses de l'art comme j'y goûte, celui que je renie, mais auquel je commande toujours assez pour le faire prendre la plume en main et écrire de tristes bavardages. Celui-là, mon cher Rodin, vous ne l'aimez pas; vous ne devez jamais le connaître. Votre ami qui dort à présent comme un ours au plus profond de mon être se réveillera sous peu : alors, il vous écrira de sa propre main. Attendez-lui. L'autre ne compte pas, ce n'est qu'un secrétaire infidèle et triste, à l'âme gelée, à la tête de bois.

'Celui qui dort est toujours, mon cher ami, bien à vous; celui qui écrit est chargé de vous en faire part et de signer de la raison sociale, ROBERT-LOUIS STEVENSON et TRIPLE-BRUTE.

(*per* T. B.)'

Il est intéressant de remarquer avec quelle insistance Stevenson dédouble dans cette lettre sa personnalité. C'est qu'à ce moment il achevait l'étrange histoire du Dr. Jekyll et de Mr. Hyde, et cela prouve jusqu'à quel point il se laissait empoigner par ses inventions, qu'il pétrissait, comme l'a dit M. de Wyzewa, de sa chair et de son sang. Dans la lettre suivante, on retrouve tout l'abandon et toute la tendresse avec lesquels il se gagnait des amis, et des plus fidèles. S'il fallait attribuer une date à cette lettre, on aurait le choix entre octobre 1885, mars ou avril 1886, et même février ou mars 1887. Si l'on retrouvait aussi le journal dans lequel parut le portrait mentionné, on pourrait fixer plus exactement l'une de ces trois dates.

'MON CHER AMI,—Je vous néglige et ce n'est véritablement pas de ma faute. J'ai fait encore une maladie et je puis dire que l'ai royalement bien fait. Que cela vous aide à me pardonner. Certes, je ne vous oublie pas et je puis dire que je ne vous oublierai jamais. Si je n'écris pas, dites que je suis malade—c'est trop souvent vrai; dites que je suis las d'écrivailler—ce sera toujours vrai; mais ne dites pas et ne pensez pas que je deviens indifférent. J'ai devant moi votre portrait tiré d'un journal anglais (et encadré à mes frais); et je le regarde avec amitié; je le regarde même avec une certaine complaisance—dirai-je de faux aloi?—comme un certificat de jeunesse. Je

me croyais trop vieux—au moins trop quarante ans—pour faire de nouveaux amis, et quand je regarde votre portrait et que je pense au plaisir de vous revoir, je sens que je m'étais trompé. Écrivez-moi donc un petit mot pour me dire que vous ne me gardez pas rancune de mon silence et que vous comptez bientôt venir en Angleterre. Si vous tardez beaucoup, ce serait moi qui irais vous relancer.

'Bien à vous, mon cher ami. R. L. STEVENSON.

'SKERRYVORE, BOURNEMOUTH.'

Est-ce avant ou après ces lettres que Stevenson vint à Paris voir le sculpteur? Après sans doute, comme il en manifeste l'intention, et dans ce cas cette lettre aurait été écrite avant septembre 1886. Mais on ne saurait rien affirmer.

M. Davray mentions in his concluding paragraph that M. Marcel Schwob visited Samoa last year and suffered an eclipse of the romantic vision of these 'ultimate isles,' which his reading of Stevenson had created. Beyond the enchantment lent by distance, the islands are not particularly picturesque, the Samoans only moderately hospitable. The climate is not of the best, and one misses nearly everything that makes for comfort in civilised life; above all, water is scarce, except in the form of rain, and even that source is at best fortuitous.

This review of an important bibliography of Stevenson appeared in *The Bibliographer* (New York), February 1902, when that journal was edited by the late Paul Leicester Ford. It contains some information of value to collectors:

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF STEVENSON.—Catalogue of a Collection of the Books of Robert Louis Stevenson in the Library of George M. Williamson, Grand View on Hudson. The Marion Press, Jamaica, Queen's Borough, New York, 1901. 125 copies on plated paper, and 25 on Japan paper.

When the late Charles B. Foote sold his library in three sales, in 1894 and 1895, he retained the works of a few authors, in

which he had an especial personal interest. Chief among these was a set of the works of Robert Louis Stevenson, and he continued to add to them until his death. Mr. Foote's wonderful collection of the first edition of Stevenson's works forms the larger portion, though by no means the entirety, of the matchless collection now owned by Mr. Williamson, and described in this beautifully printed Catalogue.

Bibliographical.

Mr. Williamson was fortunate enough, a few years ago, to secure in one lot a series of volumes all given by Stevenson, or by his mother, to his old nurse, Alison Cunningham. Some items also were secured from the A. J. Morgan collection, and a few from the collection of the late P. G. Hamerton.

The collection includes all the early rarities, which may be called Stevenson's juvenilia:—

'The Pentland Rising,' 1866. The author's first book.

'The Charity Bazaar,' 1868.

'The Edinburgh University Magazine.' Stevenson was one of the editors of this little college magazine. Four numbers only were ever published.

'Notice of a New Form of Intermittent Light for Lighthouses.' A presentation copy with inscription.

'On the Thermal Influence of Forests.' This and the preceding are two scientific treatises; which are the only published results of the author's early training towards the trade of his forefathers, an engineer.

'An Appeal to the Clergy of the Church of Scotland.' The rarest of all published books by Stevenson. This is a presentation copy from Stevenson to Mr. Foote, with autograph inscription, and with a fine autograph letter inserted, in which the author says: 'I have always admired collectors, perhaps for their similitude to pirates.'

There are also all of the Davos Platz booklets and circulars printed by Lloyd Osbourne and Co., such as 'Black Canyon,' 'Moral Emblems,' 'Not I,' and the rest, as well as a copy of an earlier piece of similar character, Vol. I. No. 3 of *The Surprise*, 'edited and published semi-monthly by S. L. Osbourne and Co.' in San Francisco. This is the copy which was given by Stevenson to his mother, and sold at Sotheby's in April 1899

for £21, 5s. This is, we believe, the only record of sale. We do not know how many numbers were published; indeed, we believe this is the only reference to the item in print. We have ourselves seen only the half of one other number.

Of other little-known pieces, the following are perhaps the most interesting and the rarest:—

The 'Silverado Squatters,' one of a few copies put up for copyright in England. As a matter of fact, the book is nothing more or less than some leaves from the *Century Magazine*, with a specially printed cover. Mr. Williamson says that ten copies were prepared; but in Sotheby's catalogue of July 28, 1899, where this copy brought £20, 10s., it is stated that only six were printed. We know of no other record and never saw another copy.

'Kidnapped,' a twenty-seven page pamphlet, with the imprint 'Published for the Author by James Henderson,' etc., without date. This contains only the first ten chapters of the story as published in book-form. It was apparently issued for copyright purposes. The text differs in a few minor particulars from the published edition. This is the only copy known to us, being the one which sold at Sotheby's in April 1899, with the statement that it had been given by Stevenson to his mother. It brought £30 at that sale.

'The Master of Ballantrae,' dated 1888. This is one of only ten copies printed to secure copyright. Inserted is a letter from Mr. Charles Scribner, in which he says, 'This is the only copy which has gone out from this office to any one in this country.' The book contains only five of the twelve chapters included in the complete edition published in 1889.

'The South Seas.' Printed in 1890 to be cut up for distribution as 'copy' among a syndicate of newspapers. Only twenty-two copies were printed, of which fourteen were destroyed. This is a presentation copy from Mr. Edmund Gosse, with a letter inserted in which these particulars are given. The book was not published in England until 1900, though it appeared in the United States in 1896.

'Weir of Hermiston.' One of 'about six copies printed in three parts and issued from January to March 1896.' It contains one less chapter than the regular edition, and a comparison shows that the text varies in a number of minor particulars.

Some other privately printed items, of little less rarity or interest, are:—

'Ticonderoga,' 1887. Printed for copyright, in an edition of fifty copies. Also a second private edition, printed specially for his Hawaiian Majesty King Kalakaua, with a letter from the De Vinne Press saying that only two copies were printed.

'Father Damien.' The original Sydney edition, also the *Australian Star* of May 24, 1890, in which Stevenson's article first appeared, there having the title, 'In Defence of the Dead.'

'An Object of Pity.' Called by Mr. Gosse 'the most unattainable of all R. L. S.'s productions.' This was a series of short stories more or less connected, written by Stevenson and his friends in Samoa in 1892. It was privately printed, in a very small number, Mr. Gosse says, 'I think only thirty-five,' by Lady Jersey, one of the authors.

'R. L. S. Teuila.' A little volume of verses and inscriptions by Stevenson, privately printed.

The rarest first edition of Stevenson is without much question the preliminary issue of his first volume of poems, 'A Child's Garden of Verses.' This has the title 'Penny Whistles.' Mr. Williamson has included a description of this item in order to make his Bibliography complete. It is the only item of any importance as a first edition of Stevenson which he does not possess. This little volume contains only forty-eight pieces, whereas in the published volume there were seventy-four. Nine of the pieces in 'Penny Whistles,' however, were not reprinted in 'A Child's Garden of Verses,' and several of the poems which were reprinted are very much altered. We believe only two copies of the original issue are known.

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